the weekly standard

MAY 19, 2003

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THE HARDEST JOB IN THE ARMY
MATT LABASH

STALIN'S LONG SHADOW

Moscow demonstration November 7, 2000

MELANA ZYLA VICKERS on Anne Applebaum's *Gulag*

STEPHEN SCHWARTZ on the Doctors' Plot

HARVEY KLEHR on Krivitsky's defection

DAVID EVANIER on Eric Hobsbawm

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Tying the knot could soon become a tangled web.

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the weekly Standard

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Aid and Comfort

Among the many unsung—or insufficiently sung—heroes of Operation Iraqi Freedom are the men and women of the hospital ship USNS *Comfort*, which was deployed to the Persian Gulf in January. The *Comfort* is a former supertanker turned 1,000-bed hospital with 12 operating rooms, staffed by Navy medical personnel and merchant marine crewmen. Its exploits were brought to our attention by an e-mail from one of the Naval Reserve doctors, Steve Crawford, which was forwarded to us. We received his permission to reprint the excerpts below.

"On the 10th of April, another doc, a nurse and myself were transferred from the USS *Boxer* by CH-46E helo to the USNS *Comfort*, the U.S. hospital ship. Unlike the medical teams on the amphibious assault ships, the *Comfort* had received many casualties. Some of these are coalition forces, however the majority are Iraqi soldiers and civilians, and a few are fighters from other Arab countries. Among the civilians are families, the elderly, and a number of children. Some of the children are alone, either orphaned by the fighting or handed to the Marines in desperation for someone to treat their injuries. A small few were 'abandoned' to the U.S. soldiers, not because the children were injured but rather, it appears, because they were developmentally retarded or emotionally disturbed. They are now our responsibility.

"I am working in the ICU. This is the largest collection of the sickest patients I have ever seen. We are caring for seven severe burn victims that would challenge any of the largest burn centers in the States. The gunshot and blast injuries are pretty horrific. The injuries were inflicted in a variety of ways: by our troops, their fighters, and some just by routine accidents unrelated to the war. To top it off, many of these patients are developing severe bacterial infections with organisms found in the Iraqi soil. Controlling these infections has been a major challenge. Most of the patients do not speak English, and the translators are kept busy. There are not enough of them to be available all the time. I cannot imagine being injured and alone with people who cannot talk to you, especially if you are only 4 years old.

"Most of us are working at least 12-hour days. It has been hard on our nurses who are pushed to the limits of their capabilities with the large number of severely sick patients. Many of our corpsmen have had little or no hospital experience. They are forced to learn quickly and learn on the job. In all, the attitude is one of firm resolve. Complaints and arguments are minimal. There is obvious frustration due to the intensity of the work and the constant shortage of supplies and medicines. We improvise with medication regimens when particular antibiotics or sedatives are unavailable for days at a time. Syringes, alcohol wipes, and certain dressings become used up, and people figure out ways to get around it. This takes a toll on the staff, and yet we are all 'in the same boat' and folks just 'buck-up' and deal with it. It is really quite amazing to realize how well these people cope with these stresses.

"If things keep going as they are, I hope there will be little need for us to stay here. The biggest hurdle appears to be how to provide long-term care and rehabilitation for these injured Iraqis. Until we find facilities in Iraq or another country to accept their care, we are stuck with no place to send them. I just hope our country and the rest of the world appreciate what lengths we are going to providing care for anyone who showed up at a coalition forces' medical aid station." ♦

Daschle's Conversion

Think back, if you will, to Monday, March 17, 2003—two days before American bombs first struck the Iraqi leadership compound. Tom Daschle was distraught and angry with the president.

"I'm saddened, saddened," he said, "that this president failed so miserably at diplomacy that we're forced to war—saddened that we have to give up one life because this president couldn't create the kind of diplomatic effort so critical for our country." This was a rather dramatic reversal for a man who had spent eight years preaching "unity" under President Clinton. In 1998, Daschle scolded Trent Lott for criticizing another in the endless string of "last chances" the U.N.'s Kofi Annan offered Saddam Hussein. "I don't know what purpose it serves by attacking one another at this point. . . . Let's not . . . send all kinds of erroneous messages to Iraq about what kind of unity there is within the community."

Good advice. And now that the war has been decisively won, Daschle is taking it. Better late than never. In a May 6 interview, Daschle told PBS's Jim Lehrer that better diplomacy "wasn't possible" and that the United States had "exhausted the diplomatic effort."

Lehrer asked Daschle if going to war had been "the right thing to do." Said Daschle: "I wish we could have worked more effectively at the diplomatic side; that wasn't possible, but having exhausted the diplomatic effort, we had no choice, in my view, but to continue to pursue our goals, and that was done, done successfully."

Unity at last. ♦

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See No Evil

Following a series of scandals involving high-profile historians, the leading professional organization in the field, the American Historical Association, is *reducing* efforts to investigate claims of dishonest scholarship. The AHA said last week it would no longer evaluate claims of plagiarism reported to it, as had been its practice, despite the dishonor brought to the profession by such recent cases of plagiarism as those of Doris Kearns Goodwin and Stephen Ambrose and by Michael Bellesiles's discredited history of gun ownership in America.

The association's rationale, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, was that its resources would be better expended elsewhere. William J. Cronon of the University of Wisconsin at Madison, head of the AHA's professional division, argued that because the association had no power to punish offenders, there was really no point in investigating plagiarism claims. The only action taken by the association in response to accusations of plagiarism has been a letter announcing their findings to those parties to the dispute. Otherwise its findings have been confidential.

One might argue then that the answer is not an end to investigations, but the publication of cases in which plagiarism has been discovered. It is a sad comment on the state of the profession, that the historians simply prefer not to police their own. But then, we already knew that from the case of Bellesiles, whose sins were effectively aired by journalists and non-historian academics. Indeed, AHA's decision is something of a fait accompli because, for a while now, it's been left to the non-professionals to police the profession. ♦

Breindel Award for Michael Kelly

The fifth annual Eric Breindel Award for Excellence in Journalism has been awarded, posthumously, to *Atlantic Monthly* editor-at-large and *Washington Post* columnist Michael Kelly, who was killed while covering the war in Iraq. Sponsored by the Eric Breindel Memorial Foundation, and generously supported by News Corporation, Breindel's longtime employer and this magazine's corporate parent, the award is the richest honor in opinion journalism, carrying a prize of $10,000. It is presented each year to the columnist or editorialist whose work best reflects the spirit that animated Eric Breindel's own writing: love of country, commitment to democratic institutions, and determination to bear witness to the evils of totalitarianism. This year, it seems to us, there could have been no other honoree.

Mike Kelly had many friends—and was universally admired—at THE WEEKLY STANDARD. We applaud the Breindel Foundation for its worthy tribute to his career. And we congratulate Mike's family, which will accept the award in his memory and on his behalf. ♦

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Casual

Television for Women

Guys don't watch sitcoms. They watch a lot of sports on TV, some news, and an occasional crime show. That's it. There's been an unheralded migration of men from sitcoms, the half-hour comedies about funny families or jobs that once dominated TV viewing. I know about this. I've participated. So has every guy I know. My friend Juan Williams says watching a sitcom is "a challenge." He'd rather avoid the agony of sitting through one. What guy could blame him?

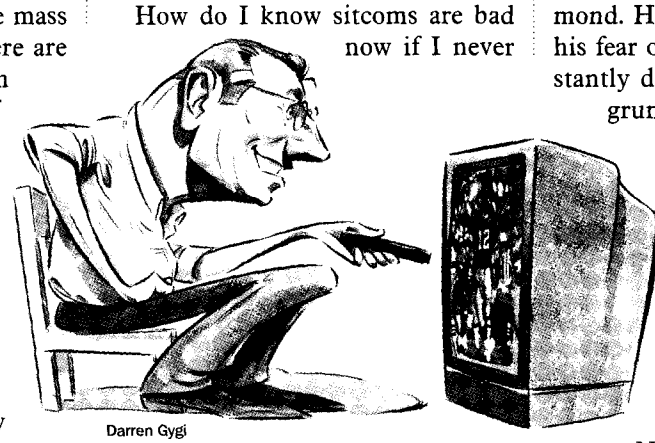
How can I be so sure of the mass flight from sitcoms? Well, there are the ratings of the top television shows. They're half or so of what they used to be for sitcoms, and I suspect the half that vamoosed is all male, both men and boys. Of course I can't prove it. I'm extrapolating from my own experience and the anecdotal evidence of most of the guys I'm acquainted with.

But ask yourself this. How many times have you heard a guy say something like, "I missed *Will and Grace* last night, but at least I remembered to tape it." Or "Man, that episode of *That '70s Show* last night was really great!" Or "Let's make sure we're home in time to watch *Friends*. It's going off the air soon." The answer to how often you've heard comments like these is never. These shows are for and about women.

Once guys did watch sitcoms. I certainly did when I was growing up in the '50s and early '60s—*I Love Lucy*, to cite one. And in the late '60s and early '70s, my wife and I would watch *The Dick Van Dyke Show* and *Mary Tyler Moore* and *The Bob Newhart Show*. I thought they were funny. I still do.

Since then, there have been few sitcoms worth watching. I once appeared in a *Murphy Brown* episode, along with John McLaughlin and Eleanor Clift of *The McLaughlin Group*, and it was pretty funny, even witty. And *Seinfeld*, I'm told, was an extremely funny show. But now, there's zilch. (I'm not counting *The Simpsons* because it's a cartoon.) It's not only that guys would rather watch sports. There's no real alternative for them.

How do I know sitcoms are bad now if I never watch? Good question. In truth, I watch snatches of sitcoms. There are women living in my home who turn these shows on, and, as I'm walking by, I'll pause a few minutes to watch. So I get a fairly good idea what *Friends*, say, is all about, namely three guys and three women who live in the same house somewhere, or maybe it's an apartment.



Darren Gygi

Friends is a good example of why guys don't watch sitcoms. This is a popular show, especially at my house. Sure, the women on *Friends* are good looking, but the guys on the show are wimps. They're fully grown, but act like they're junior high girls. Can you imagine them in the Army? With guys like them in Iraq, we'd have lost the war. Guys get this treatment in other sitcoms, too. They are dopes, oafs, or weenies. Whatever's going on, they usually haven't got a clue.

A few years ago, I met Patricia Heaton, the star of *Everybody Loves Raymond*, as successful a sitcom as there is these days. She was one of the speakers at a pro-life banquet in New Jersey. Heaton is quite attractive and very courageous. It doesn't do her career any good to be known as a serious foe of abortion. Hollywood frowns on such sentiments, but she persists. She also testified before Congress against cloning. I was impressed.

So I was determined to watch and like *Everybody Loves Raymond*. I failed. Heaton is a fine actress, but the show is chiefly about the husband of the character she plays. He's Raymond. His most conspicuous trait is his fear of his parents, who are constantly dropping by. His father is a grump. His mother is a bozo. But Raymond doesn't see them that way. For much of the show, he is oblivious to what's really going on. Guys don't identify with this type of character.

If guys can't watch hit shows like *Friends* or *Everybody Loves Raymond*, then what can they watch? News, but only for short periods of time. And sports. Which, for guys, is the viewing choice of either last resort or only resort. Fortunately, there's plenty of sports on TV, most of it wonderfully produced. Have you ever seen *SportsCenter*? Best show on television. Witty hosts, but no laugh track.

The real test of guys and sitcoms came several years ago when a sitcom about a show just like *SportsCenter* went on the air. It was supposed to attract guys. In my case, I wasn't for even a fleeting moment tempted to watch. And soon enough it was off the air.

Fred Barnes

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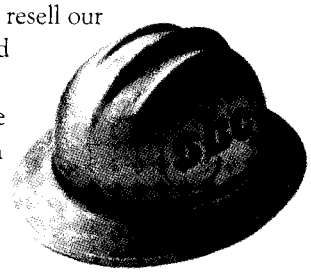

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On Saddam's Dole

I just finished a second reading of Stephen F. Hayes's "Saddam's Cash" (May 5). What a revelation! Maybe I'm naive, but it never occurred to me before that our uphill struggle in the propaganda war, despite clearly being on the right side of the argument, was due to Saddam's having many of the opposing politicians and journalists on his payroll.

Clearly most of the opponents of the war spoke from conviction and were not just indulging a greedy self-interest. But how many of those honorable dissenters were unduly influenced by others who were on the take?

I have supported President Bush's aggressive Iraq policy from the start, but I admit I paused to reexamine my own position when Scott Ritter started to speak out in opposition. If a man with his credentials and reputation had misgivings, might I not be mistaken in my support of the president? I listened carefully to his arguments, but found them unconvincing. I wondered what his motives might be. Now I suspect I may have some insight into that subject. I can't help but wonder what other revelations may be in store for the world as more and more captured Iraqi documents are revealed.

Jesse McVay
Dover, DE

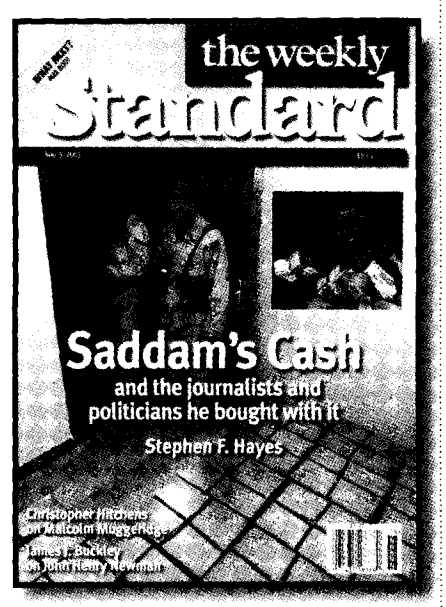
Stephen F. Hayes wrote an excellent piece on "Saddam's Cash" but gives Saudi Arabia a backhanded pass with these two sentences: "The Saudis, of course, have financed public works throughout the Middle East and Africa. But no one played the game like Saddam Hussein." The Weekly Standard has been hard-hitting on Saudi Arabia, and there isn't any doubt in my mind that the Saudis distribute cash to buy U.S. friendship. It cannot be repeated often enough that 15 of the 19 terrorists on 9/11 were Saudi citizens. Why wouldn't Saddam think he could get away with it as well?

George Hulshart
Myrtle Beach, SC

Road Map to Nowhere

In his May 5 editorial "A Real Peace Process," Fred Barnes writes that Israel has a vested interest in the newly named Palestinian prime minister Mahmoud Abbas "since the alternative is Arafat." Is this logic compelling? What if he is Arafat's ally despite their occasional differences? What if he is as committed as Arafat to the Arab dream of destroying Israel? If he is as compromised by terror as Arafat, what message does it teach to embrace him?

In Abbas's speech this week, I heard no call on the Arab nations to accept Israel's rightful presence. There was no call on Egypt to end its cold war on Israel, nor on Jordan to become a friend. And there was certainly no demand that the other Arabs help those Arabs and their descendents who left Israel in the



1940s to make homes in the Arab world. The wars in the Middle East cannot be resolved by pretending that the conflict is between Israel and the Arab Palestinians alone.

Barnes maintains that as Abbas is working to improve security for Israelis, Israel must reduce checkpoints, allow Arab Palestinians to work in Israel, and release prisoners. Barnes makes no mention of the one thing Abbas could implement immediately without fighting Hamas, et al; namely, ceasing the glorification of anti-Semitism and replacing it with acceptance of the Jewish claim to political independence. All the talk of halting terror never says that terror includes attacks against Jews outside of the 1949 armistice lines. And again, what did Abbas say this week about the armed groups in the PA? Not that the PA would be demilitarized, but that the armed forces should be under a central command. He did not say what those forces would be used for.

Unfortunately, the "road map" is far from being a "real peace process." It amounts to a political victory for Arafat in his terror war.

Joseph Shier
Toronto, Ontario

Home Base

As Tom Donnelly points out in "There's No Place Like Iraq . . ." (May 5), a permanent U.S. presence in a friendly, allied Middle Eastern nation would be a boon to regional and U.S. security and development. He suggests Iraq.

I suggest Israel. Wouldn't such a base solve Israel's major security issue, thereby contributing greatly to the prospect for agreement with the Palestinians? And wouldn't such an agreement remove the irritant ostensibly preventing Israel's neighbors from normalizing relations? It would be safer for our troops, not to mention a great relief to them, to be stationed in a friendly, Western-looking, democratic country.

After all, South Korea and the former West Germany were kept safe for decades in just the same manner.

Steven Gruber
Syosset, NY

Great Minds, Great Wall

As director of the Mandarin Service at Radio Free Asia, I monitor what callers from China say every day on our toll-free "Listener Hotline." The title of Ellen Bork's "Great Wall of Lies" (May 5) caught my eye because that is exactly how one caller described the Chinese government's approach to the SARS epidemic. If what our callers say is any indication, the Chinese government is still underreporting SARS figures.

When it comes to the Communist party of China, the loss of human lives has never been a matter of overriding

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What's the difference between $110,100 and $27,800?

$110,100

You could be paying for it.

$27,800

An obstetrician in Illinois pays $110,100 a year for malpractice insurance. Next door in Wisconsin, the same doctor would pay $27,800. Why?

There's no good answer, except that the U.S. medical malpractice system is badly broken, and it's threatening the accessibility, affordability and quality of healthcare for millions. Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans cover nearly one in three Americans. Eighty-eight percent of these plans report that the medical malpractice insurance problem increases healthcare costs and decreases access to care – especially for high-risk specialties. Three-quarters of physicians responding to a Harris survey in February said malpractice insurance concerns cause them to order unnecessary tests and make redundant referrals.

Americans know they're picking up the tab for these preventable costs. A separate Harris survey found that 58 percent favor new legislation to limit medical liability and reduce the costs of medical malpractice insurance.

The problem doesn't end there. A new report by the Department of Health and Human Services found that because of the malpractice insurance predicament, "more patients in more states are facing greater difficulty in obtaining access to doctors." Rising rates cause some physicians to refuse high-risk procedures, move their practices to more malpractice-friendly jurisdictions or retire from medicine entirely. Again, Americans know the score. Fifty-nine percent think that malpractice suits and doctors' fear of being sued harm the quality of medical care.

Fortunately, there are steps we can take now to fix this problem before it gets worse. With the leadership of President Bush, Congress has introduced new legislation based on a California law with a quarter-century track record of controlling malpractice costs. BCBSA believes the legislation, which has passed the House and awaits action in the Senate, offers an excellent framework.

Like California and other states that have enacted medical liability reform, the federal legislation would limit "non-economic" damages to $250,000. An analysis by *USA Today* shows that states limiting such awards to $500,000 or less have average malpractice premiums 23 percent lower than states without limits. It is critically important that these protections be extended to all healthcare stakeholders.

As the nation's largest family of healthcare insurance companies, it's clear to us that solving the problem of rising healthcare costs requires a coordinated approach to out-of-control malpractice costs. Most Americans agree.

BCBSA has joined with more than 50 organizations – representing physicians, hospitals, employers, insurers and consumers – in the Health Coalition on Liability and Access. Together we are urging Congress to pass common-sense federal medical liability reforms which protect patients' access to care.

BlueCross BlueShield Association

An Association of Independent Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans

For more information, visit our Web site at *www.bcbs.com* and click on 'medical liability reform.'

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concern. Maintaining legitimacy to assure its continuing existence has been the only core value to which the party adheres. Case in point—during the recent anti-corruption campaign, former party secretary Jiang Zemin warned that rampant corruption, if unchallenged, would eventually threaten the existence of the party.

I think as far as SARS is concerned, the factional infighting caused by the disease will not be as threatening to the party's claim to legitimacy as the economic slump SARS will undoubtedly sink China into, because the party's only claim to legitimacy has been the degree of economic prosperity it has brought to many of its citizens. Once that goes, so will the party's claim to legitimacy.

JENNIFER CHOU
Washington, DC

MARINES AND MACHINES

I AGREE with much of what Tom Donnelly has to say in his piece "Lessons of a Three-Week War" (April 28). But I take issue with some of his observations about the Marines in Iraq. Marines, of course, are used to such gratuitous comments like the one Donnelly makes that the Marines don't travel anywhere "without a full complement of embedded reporters." Such nonsense goes back a long time. Who can forget the claim of Harry Truman, a notorious hater of the Marine Corps, that the Marines had a propaganda machine equal to that of Stalin?

Cheap shots notwithstanding, his substantive claims are just as questionable. Donnelly criticizes the Marines for their "jack-of-all-trades" mentality. Some people call this flexibility and adaptability and believe these are military virtues, especially given the fact that wars rarely go as planned because of what Clausewitz called "friction" and the "fog of uncertainty" in war. The Marines figured out some time ago that the American people were not going to pay billions of dollars for a military that just waits around for the big one.

General Charles Krulak, former commandant of the Marine Corps, used to argue that Marines had to be prepared to fight a "three-block war." The first block might require the Marines to engage in high-intensity combat. The second might require them to carry out constabulary operations. The third might require them to support humanitarian relief efforts. Iraq illustrates just how prescient Gen. Krulak was.

It was the flexibility and adaptability of the Marines, as well as their expeditionary culture, that led Gen. Tommy Franks to use Marines in the early phases of Afghanistan to carry out what has always been understood as a textbook Army mission, the seizure of an airfield in a theater of operations far from any shoreline. It was flexibility and adaptability, as well as their expeditionary culture, that enabled the Marines to deploy, without fanfare, more rolling stock into Iraq at the outset of the war than an Army heavy division, something that has caused consternation on the Army staff.

Donnelly is right about the Marines' old equipment. It is a problem, but one the Marines would like to rectify. They want to replace their antiquated medium lift helicopter with the tilt-rotor MV-22 Osprey and their current amphibious assault vehicle with an advanced amphibian. But in the meantime, the Marines make do with what they have.

The types of missions for which land forces will be needed in the future will be expeditionary in nature. As former Marine commandant Gen. Carl Mundy was fond of saying, "'Expeditionary' is not a mission. It's a mindset." The Marines have developed an expeditionary mindset over decades. This is the main reason why the Marines will continue to have a major role to play in helping to ensure U.S. national security in the future.

MACKUBIN OWENS
Naval War College
Newport, RI

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MUGGED BY REALITY

IN HIS INSIGHTFUL REVIEW of Gregory Wolfe's biography of Malcolm Muggeridge, "A Hundred Years of Muggery" (May 5), Christopher Hitchens asks whether Muggeridge has an aphorism for the age. I think Mugg's "copulo ergo sum" mentioned to me in conversation in the early 1980s is one that might last.

IAIN T. BENSON
Lourdes, France

JUMPING THE SHARK

THE WEEKLY STANDARD has done a conscientious job of pointing out the unethical tactics the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals has employed to further its agenda, but it has taken a letter from one of PETA's own to crystallize the group's, and the entire animal-rights movement's, logical inconsistency, not to say hypocrisy.

To wit, correspondent William Rivas-Rivas in his letter of April 28, decrying the Navy's use of dolphins to detect mines in the Persian Gulf, speaks movingly of "putting innocent animals in danger in shark-infested waters." Am I the only one who wonders—who will speak for the sharks?

THOMAS MCINTYRE
Sheridan, WY

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HELPING TROOPS AND THEIR FAMILIES STAY CONNECTED

Today, of the two million men and women on active duty in America's armed services, about two-thirds are married and more than half are parents. Many are separated from their families for months at a time, even in peacetime.

The emotional stress of long separations puts a strain on family life and can affect troop morale. Fortunately, today's information technologies are helping to bridge the miles.

Getting access to a telephone can still be difficult on the front lines, and calling home is complicated by time differences overseas. But many in the military now have access to personal computers and the Internet, which they are authorized to use for personal e-mail and instant messaging as well as for official business.

E-mail enables families to initiate contact instead of waiting for the phone to ring. When they have an emergency and need to reach a member of the military who cannot go online, families rely on the American Red Cross to relay the message via e-mail to its field offices at 108 U.S. military installations worldwide.

Families of men and women recently serving in Iraq and the Persian Gulf say that e-mail has been a precious lifeline, one that has helped ease their fears even as it brought the conflict home with dramatic immediacy. And some have discovered new ways to use technology to support each other, as well as the troops.

Pamela Bates, for instance, lives in Fort Benning, Georgia. Her husband Daniel, a sergeant in a field-artillery unit, was sent to Kuwait in January. She wanted a way to keep in touch with other families of the 1,000 soldiers in her husband's unit. She also wanted to let the soldiers know that people back home were thinking of them.

So Pamela created a Web site. Although she had never built one before, she used the tools available on MSN to launch her "Hugs to Kuwait" site—in two days. She asked visitors to the site to correspond with individuals in her husband's unit and with their families, as a way to help them all feel connected and supported.

The Internet is a vital tool for today's military families

In just a few weeks, and after a national TV news program broadcast an interview with Pamela, more than 30,000 people joined her site's chat room. Several other military units contacted her and asked to be included. By mid-April, more than 91,000 soldiers had been "adopted" by Internet pen pals from across the United States and in 17 other countries.

Technology cannot diminish the dangers of war nor entirely ease the ache of separation. But it can help maintain lines of communication, love and support, which may smooth the process of adjustment once families are reunited. And it can provide a means for people to come together as a community, which is especially valuable in times of crisis.

One in a series of essays on technology and society. More information is available at microsoft.com/issues.

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— First Lady Laura Bush, February 13, 2003

First Lady Laura Bush
Honorary Ambassador to UNESCO's Literacy Decade

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the weekly Standard

Filibuster Again! And Again!

Six times now Senate Democrats have blocked a vote on Miguel Estrada's nomination to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia. And twice Senate Democrats have blocked a vote on Priscilla Owen's nomination to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. Republicans are outraged by the filibusters. And they are outrageous. But permit us to invite the Democrats to stay their stupid course: Filibuster again! And again!

Okay, if you're Miguel or Priscilla or Carolyn Kuhl, a Ninth Circuit nominee who may be the next to be filibustered, it's no fun watching Republicans move to cut off debate and then seeing Democrats again muster more than the 40 votes needed (a supermajority of 60 being necessary under Senate rules to end debate) to keep you from being voted on. Which is to say from being confirmed, since you know just as the rest of the world does that there is a Senate majority that includes the few sensible Democrats still remaining in the upper chamber, like Zell Miller of Georgia, who would say yes if only the roll were called.

Some have proposed that Republicans sue over the filibuster. Any judge worth his clerk would throw out any such lawsuit.

But if the Democrats are going to persist in what Sen. Russell Feingold has conceded is "an extreme step," then by all means the nominees should allow, and the Republican Senate should create, opportunities for them to be extreme. Majority Leader Bill Frist: Keep calling those cloture votes. And you Democrats: Keep voting no.

Is there any better way to publicize the message about "Democratic obstruction on judges" (a principal Republican talking point) than by repeated votes by Senate minorities made up exclusively of Democrats that prevent Senate majorities from approving the president's nominees? Keep in mind that we're not talking here about less visible means of obstruction. We're not talking about what the Democratic-run Judiciary Committee did in 2001-02 —when it failed to hold, or unreasonably delayed, hearings, or when it held a hearing but declined to vote on the nominee. No, here we're talking about quite public blocking actions—recorded votes. If the Democrats keep committing them, the Republicans should gleefully advertise them throughout the country.

Right now, the Republicans are trying to find ways to fix "the broken confirmation process" (another Republican talking point). Some Republicans have suggested that the president should sue filibustering Democrats on account of the Appointments Clause injury he is suffering by not having his nominees voted on; or that Estrada or Owen should complain because of some (unspecified) injury they have endured by not being voted on; or that some Republican senators should file a suit, since they are part of a majority that would confirm but for the bad Dems, and that therefore they are being denied their constitutional "right to consent," a right found somewhere in the spilt ink between the lines of the original text. Of course, any judge worth his clerk would throw out any such lawsuit on the understanding that the Senate should work out its own rules. Speaking of which, the Republicans do have lots of ways to change the rules so as to overcome or prevent filibusters of nominations, and there is a good proposal or two among them. But no changes in Senate rules can be made except by a two-thirds vote—an even bigger hill to climb.

The truth is that there is no way other than ordinary politics truly to "fix" the process. Not incidentally, the Senate Republican leadership could force the Democrats to conduct a real filibuster—marathon, stay-up-all-night sessions like those of yesteryear. That might fix the process real quick. A larger Republican majority—obtained through electoral politics—could also fix the process. Consider that a majority of 56 Republicans—five more than now—is all that would be needed (since four Democrats would join them) to force a vote on the Estrada nomination.

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The chief utility, we suppose, of the loud search for ways to "fix" the process is to draw media attention to the Democrats' extremism. And of course the Republicans know that. (Maybe that's why they haven't forced a classic filibuster.) The wonder is that the Democrats seem clueless about the degree to which their blocking votes on nominees could hurt their chances for retaking the Senate in 2004.

Have they not seen, have they not heard, that in 2002 Republicans won the Senate in part because Bush made the Democrats' treatment of his nominees an issue? "And I'll tell you another big issue, . . ." he said on election eve in Missouri. "I have a responsibility to name good people to the bench. I've named a lot of really good people . . . but the bunch running the Senate [the Democrats] has done a lousy job on my nominees."

In 2004, 19 of the 34 seats at stake in the Senate are Democratic, and independent observers believe Democrats can be confident of retaining no more than 9 of the 19, while Republicans can count on holding at least 10 of their 15. Can Democrats really relish the prospect of President Bush's campaigning in states like Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Florida, Arkansas, Nevada, North Dakota, and South Dakota, and talking, as he did in Rose Garden remarks last week, about the "crisis in our Senate" and "therefore . . . in our judiciary" produced by Democratic filibusters designed "to prevent an up-or-down vote on an appeals court nominee"? The vote-blocking Democrats are not only hurting their own party's chances of recapturing the Senate but also handicapping their presidential nominee. What's that person going to say—"I favor filibusters of Bush's nominees, but not of my own"? Come to think of it, what are Joe Lieberman, Bob Graham, John Edwards, and John Kerry—vote-blockers all—going to say?

If the Democrats were smart, they would quit standing in the way of votes on nominees right now. They would see that what is sauce for the Republican goose could someday be sauce for their gander, and they shouldn't like that prospect one bit. More important, they would recognize that blocking votes on nominees who enjoy majority support, while not exactly unconstitutional, shows disrespect for the exclusive authority of the president to nominate judges.

Democrats once understood the nominating power. Maybe they can recall the example of FDR. But then again, maybe they can't. And maybe they really do think that their filibustering is good for the country. If so, no one—tongue in cheek or not—need admonish them to keep on filibustering. They'll do it anyway, borrowing trouble all the way through Election Day.

—Terry Eastland, for the Editors

Michael Ramirez

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The Right Kind of Tax Cut

The point is a growing economy, not a "legislative victory." BY BRUCE BARTLETT

SOMEONE ONCE DEFINED a fanatic as someone who redoubles his efforts after losing sight of his objective. Based on this definition, the Bush administration is in danger of becoming fanatical on tax policy.

Last fall, as the administration prepared its January budget proposal, there was a spirited debate about what sort of tax initiatives it would offer. A number of proposals were floated in the press, but the one President Bush got behind was a plan to reduce the cost of capital by eliminating the double taxation of corporate profits.

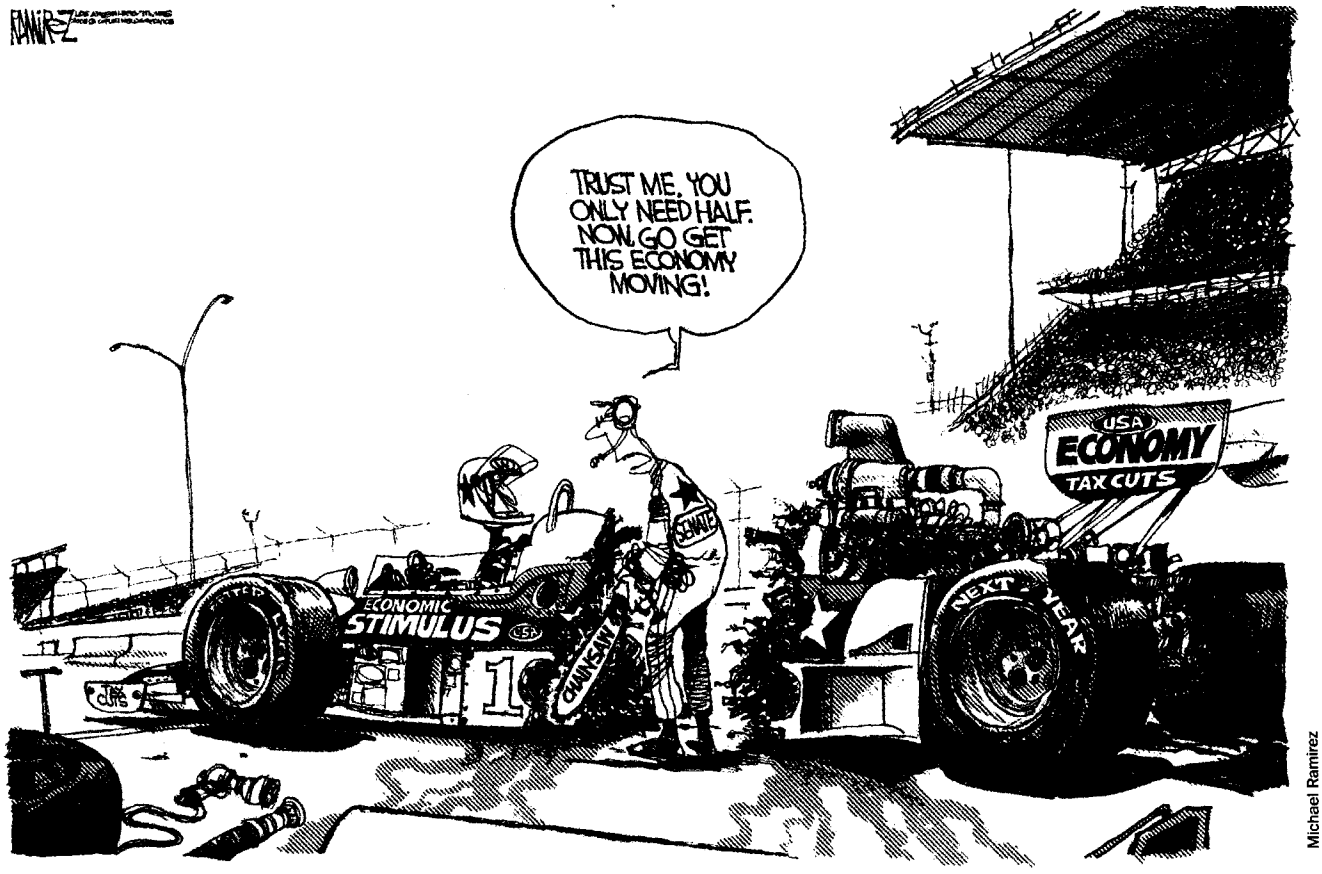
Bruce Bartlett is a senior fellow at the National Center for Policy Analysis.

At present, such profits are taxed once by the corporate income tax at rates up to 35 percent, and then again when they are paid out as dividends to shareholders at rates up to 38.6 percent. This creates a high effective tax rate on corporate capital that discourages investment—leading to lower productivity, economic growth, and wages. That is why virtually all other major countries try to avoid or minimize double taxation in some way.

The president's plan was a good one. However, the dividend portion of it would have reduced federal revenues by $400 billion over 11 years, and the total tax package, including other provisions, would have lowered revenues by $726 billion. But the House budget resolution pared this down to just $550 billion for the entire tax package, and the Senate budget resolution whittled away even further, allowing a total revenue loss of just $350 billion.

Despite this setback, the Bush administration remained wedded to its original plan. Although President Bush said he supported the House figure, he never put forward a revised tax package that would fit within its constraint. Left without White House guidance, House Ways and Means Committee chairman Bill Thomas, Republican from California, was forced to devise his own tax package.

The Thomas plan abandoned full elimination of double taxation as excessively costly in terms of revenue. Instead, he proposed capping the tax rate on dividends received at 15 percent and also cutting the maximum tax rate on capital gains to 15 percent. In addition, Thomas proposed allowing corporations making new invest-



Michael Ramirez

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[1]SBC Global Company Fact Sheet (http://www.sbc.com/press_room/1,5932,24,00.html) [2]Dow Jones Business News 4/24/03

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ments in capital equipment to deduct a larger portion of such investments in the first year.

The White House was cool to the Thomas proposal because it did not contain the president's signature initiative—eliminating, not just reducing, double taxation of corporate profits. Still, the White House never explained how its proposal was going to fit into a budget cap 25 percent smaller than the president's original plan.

Turning its attention to the Senate, the White House redoubled its efforts to salvage the dividend plan. But again, it failed to put forward a proposal of its own that would take account of the lower revenue loss allowed under the budget resolution, not to mention the more difficult political situation in the Senate. Republicans there have a 51-49 majority, but John McCain of Arizona and Lincoln Chafee of Rhode Island are cemented on the anti-tax-cut side, along with every Democrat except Georgia's Zell Miller.

This meant that it is essential for the White House to get the votes of two wavering Republicans, George Voinovich of Ohio and Olympia Snowe of Maine. Both are adamant about holding a tax cut below $350 billion, and Snowe is also concerned about any tax cut tilted too much toward the wealthy. Unfortunately, very few poor people own stock or receive dividends. And because Snowe sits on the Senate Finance Committee, where Republicans have just a one-seat majority, her views on this matter are pivotal.

Finance Committee chairman Charles Grassley of Iowa did his best to square the circle by phasing in the president's dividend proposal over three years and then having it expire—the theory being that budget targets are technically being met and Congress can revisit the issue later. But even this watered-down version of eliminating double taxation was too much for Snowe, who insisted that dividend relief be limited to exempting the first $500 of dividends from taxation. To get a bill out of committee, Grassley agreed to the Snowe alternative.

Economically, however, the price was high. Exempting the first $500 of dividends will do little, if anything, to lower the cost of capital or change the behavior of corporate executives. Therefore, it will do nothing to raise growth or productivity, either in the short run or the long run. About the best thing to be said for it is that it looks a little more like President Bush's plan than the Thomas alternative.

The White House view seems to be that it will make any compromise necessary to get a tax bill—any tax bill—out of the Senate. The real work will then be done in conference between the House and Senate. It is there that the White House will have to decide how adamant it is about salvaging some version of its original plan—even if it is virtually unrecognizable—so that it can declare a legislative victory. But the cost could be prohibitive in terms of sacrificing tax provisions, such as those in the Thomas bill, that would do much more to stimulate growth between now and Election Day 2004.

Legislative triumphs are like what people used to say about Chinese food—an hour later you are hungry again. On the other hand, pollsters, political scientists, and economists are united in their view that economic conditions largely determine the outcome of presidential elections. This suggests that the White House should swallow its pride and push as forcefully as possible for a tax bill that will do as much for growth as possible over the next 18 months, even if it bears little resemblance to the president's original plan. ♦

True Confessions

Time to revisit *Miranda*.

BY WILLIAM TUCKER

TWO YEARS AGO, federal agents in Colorado responded to a complaint at the home of Samuel Patane, an ex-convict under a restraining order for beating his wife.

Patane's probation officer had warned the agents that the convicted felon had a Glock pistol and a penchant for violence. After entering the home, agents began reading Patane his *Miranda* warnings—the right to remain silent and to contact his lawyer. Impatiently, Patane told the feds he already knew his rights. Then he directed officers to his gun after they asked about it. Patane was indicted for possessing an illegal firearm.

As the case wended its way through the courts, however, Patane's lawyer raised objections. Because federal agents had not *finished* reading Patane his *Miranda* rights, it was argued, the gun had been seized illegally. Colorado's liberal judiciary agreed. The evidence was dismissed under the "exclusionary rule," which says evidence cannot be used in court if it has been acquired in violation of the Fourth or Fifth Amendment.

Two weeks ago, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to review the case. U.S. solicitor general Theodore Olson argued that the *Miranda* warning applies only to confessions, not to hard physical evidence. But the case also offers an opportunity to review the entire 38-year history of what is perhaps the Supreme Court's most controversial criminal ruling ever.

Although *Miranda* is commonly remembered as having eliminated "third-degree" beatings of criminal suspects, in fact the real concern of the Warren Court's slim 5-to-4 majority was the "coercive atmos-

William Tucker is a columnist for the New York Sun.

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phere" of interrogation itself. "Again we stress that the modern practice of in-custody interrogation is psychologically rather than physically oriented," wrote Chief Justice Earl Warren for the majority. "As we have stated before . . . 'coercion can be mental as well as physical.'"

The court buttressed its decision by citing textbooks and police manuals. These how-to guides outlined "good-cop, bad-cop" routines and, above all, recommended "patience and persistence" in questioning. Justifying its decision, the Court quoted one manual's instruction that an interrogator should "patiently maneuver himself or his quarry into a position from which the desired objective may be obtained."

"Arguably the most influential opinion journal at the White House."

The New York Times Magazine
April 13, 2003

In truth, what the court really didn't like was confessions themselves. "The government [should] 'shoulder the entire load' [by] produc[ing] the evidence against [the suspect] by its own independent labors, rather than by the cruel, simple expedient of compelling it from his own mouth," wrote the majority. Perhaps influenced by too many Agatha Christie novels, the justices seemed to believe that solving crimes was a matter of brilliant deduction. Yet real detectives and prosecutors say the vast majority of their cases would go nowhere unless they can at least confront the suspects.

It's not that interrogation always leads to confession. Just as often a suspect incriminates himself by telling the police something that proves not to be true. O.J. Simpson never confessed to anything, yet his unlikely account of his actions on the night of his former wife's murder played a big role in his (albeit unsuccessful) prosecution. Ellis H. Parker, a legendary detective of the early twentieth century, had a theory. He believed the person with the best alibi was the most likely suspect in any crime. "The average person doesn't know precisely where he was every minute of the day," he wrote. "Only someone who has carefully rehearsed his whereabouts is likely to have a good story." Parker is reported to have solved 226 of 236 murders he investigated during his career.

Miranda, however, makes it possible for a suspect to refuse any cooperation with the police. And, in an important corollary, it forbids the police from drawing any negative inferences from this refusal. Fortunately this is not widely recognized or solving crimes might cease altogether. "The overwhelming number of defendants still think they're implicating themselves if they refuse to talk to the police," says one Manhattan prosecutor. "It's a good thing they do. Otherwise we'd probably lose more than half our convictions."

The impact of *Miranda* has been to give defendants enormous leverage in plea-bargaining. The ruling's defenders argue that the number of cases where confessed criminals go free is insignificantly small. But that's not the point. More than 90 percent of all cases are settled without trial. And *Miranda* has had quite an impact on plea-bargaining, according to criminologist Henry Pontell in his 1984 book *A Capacity to Punish*. Before 1966—the year *Miranda* was decided—60 percent of California defendants pleaded guilty to the original top charge. The next year this figure dropped to 42 percent and remained there. Correspondingly, the number who pleaded guilty to reduced charges rose from 27 percent before 1966 to 40 percent. The ability to challenge confessions obviously had an impact.

And even if the number of outright dismissals is small, their patent absurdity can demoralize the public. The Colorado case is only the latest of a long line. In one early Philadelphia case, a confessed murderer went free because the police officers' *Miranda* card said, "anything you say may be held *for or* against you." The courts ruled the miswording created a "false sense of security." Confessions have been thrown out because the police read the *Miranda* warning too soon or too late or not loud enough or in the wrong language. Jim Arehart, a longtime federal prosecutor in Kentucky, recalls a case where bloodhounds cornered two bank robbers in the woods. "We did the robbery, now get these dogs off of us," shouted one suspect. The confession was excluded because, in effect, the dogs had not read the suspects their *Miranda* warning.

But perhaps the real problem with *Miranda*—one never considered by the Warren Court—is that criminals are, after all, human beings, and confession is physically, spiritually, and psychologically relieving. "They want to get things off their chests," says Mike Sheehan, a former New York City detective who has heard hundreds of confessions during his career. "Or they may want to rationalize. Often they don't think they've done anything wrong. They have

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their own side of the story and they want you to hear it. This idea of police beating confessions out of suspects using the third degree is silly. All you have to do is find the right framework and make them comfortable and they'll usually tell you the whole story."

One thing reported by many interrogators is that, no matter how nervous or agitated the suspect has been during questioning, once he has confessed he will return to his cell and sleep soundly for several hours. "They've got it off their chests, they just lay down and go to sleep," said one detective, quoted in the *New York Times Magazine*.

It is at this point that the defense attorney enters the picture. Why would anyone confess to a crime, he argues, especially when a long jail sentence or even the death penalty is involved? And the criminal himself often has second thoughts. After the relief has passed and reality sets in, he may wonder, why did I do that? At this point, the story begins to change. The police coerced him. They threatened reprisal against his family. They said they'd maim him if he didn't confess. Even where the entire process has been videotaped, a defendant will make such claims.

Anyone can later deny a confession, of course. In a trial, the jury can see both sides and weigh the evidence itself. But if an attorney can convince the judge that the defendant's *Miranda* rights were violated, the jury will never know of the confession and the case may collapse.

Solicitor General Olson seems to have a good case in arguing that *Miranda* was only intended to exclude confessions, not physical evidence. The Supreme Court may well decide the case on narrow grounds. But in an age when almost every confession is videotaped, *Patane* v. *Colorado* could prove an opportune moment to go back and reexamine the entire premise on which *Miranda* was decided in the first place—that the state has done something underhanded every time a suspect confesses to a crime. ♦

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The Democrats' Preemptive War

Bush's Supreme Court nominees are under attack before they're even named. BY JAMES L. SWANSON

THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL Committee has just declared war on President Bush's first nominee to the U.S. Supreme Court. But how can that be? There is no vacancy to fill and no nominee to attack. Well, that doesn't matter, according to the DNC's new website "Supreme Court Countdown," because the real enemy is George W. Bush. Indeed, the site screams, "American Values Are at Risk Under a Bush-Packed Supreme Court!"

The "Supreme Court Countdown" (*www.democrats.org/scotus*) is part of an unprecedented political campaign to thwart a president from appointing any justices to the High Court. It is no secret that, for the past two years, Senate Democrats have been readying to oppose Bush's first Supreme Court nominee. But now they aren't waiting for an actual vacancy and nomination. The DNC's site boasts that it is part of a preemptive "campaign that is vital to defeating extremist nominees to the Supreme Court." Why now? Because the DNC fears that one or more justices might retire when the Court's term ends in late June.

The DNC is right about one thing—core constitutional values are in danger. The threat, though, comes not from President Bush or his putative High Court nominees, but from those who seek to politicize our federal courts by undermining the president's ability to staff the federal judiciary with judges who follow law, not politics.

The authors of the "Supreme Court Countdown" employ classic propaganda tactics. First they induce panic in their followers by declaring a state of emergency: "Bush will name ultra-conservative nominees who will vote quickly to overturn decades of Supreme Court protections of our cherished American values; his choices for the nation's highest court will be way out of the mainstream; with the Court already hanging in a delicate balance, any change puts our most fundamental freedoms at risk; our most precious and fundamental rights are in danger."

Next, they smear those they oppose with labels. The DNC never refers to the president's appellate or potential Supreme Court nominees as simply "Republicans" or "conservatives." No, they're "extremists," "way out of the mainstream," or, worst of all, "extremist right-wing ideologues" who display "hostility to Constitutional rights" and "attack working families."

Then they distort history. The DNC accuses President Bush of wanting to "pack" the Supreme Court. "Court packing," of course, was the invention of Franklin D. Roosevelt, who tried unsuccessfully in 1937 to add six new justices to the Supreme Court. If a vacancy occurs, President Bush will simply nominate a replacement for the retiring justice, which the Constitution requires him to do.

Finally, the DNC site pairs misleading words with emotional imagery. As the website tallies up the rights that George W. Bush seeks to destroy—including free speech, civil rights, voting rights, religious freedom, and more—it flashes images of Martin Luther King Jr. at the Lincoln Memorial, of African Americans being subdued by fire-hoses, Norman Rockwell's painting of an American everyman speaking at a town meeting, a teacher, and hands clasped in prayer—as though the president's judicial nominees would silence King, turn Bull Connor's hoses back on, censor public debate, close classrooms, and forbid prayer.

The graphic climax is a bar chart—the "Supreme Court Advisory System"—which, in grotesque mimicry of the Department of Homeland Security's terrorist warning system, purports to assess the threat level of a Bush-packed Court. (The current danger level is "HIGH: High Risk to American Values," just one step below the maximum danger of "SEVERE: Severe Risk of Right-Wing Court.") Yes, it has gone that far. We're invited to believe that President Bush's appointment of a Supreme Court justice is tantamount to terrorism.

With the "Supreme Court Countdown," the left's accelerating politicization of judicial nominations has reached a new low. ♦

SUPREME COURT COUNTDOWN

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Act Now! America's Values at Risk With Supreme Court Vacancy

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But these American values are endangered.

One or more Supreme Court Justices will likely retire at the end of the current session this June.

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James L. Swanson is a senior fellow in constitutional studies at the Cato Institute and editor in chief of the Cato Supreme Court Review.

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Oh, the Humanities!

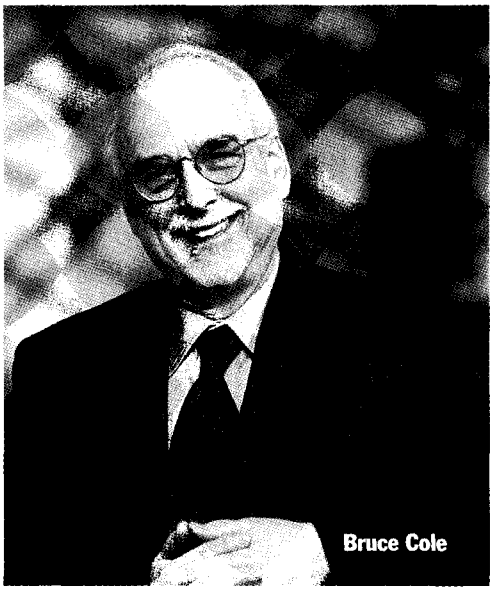
NEH chairman Bruce Cole's cure for national amnesia. BY RACHEL DICARLO

BRUCE COLE, the new chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, wants to put the "H" back in NEH. His two Clinton-administration predecessors had other priorities for the agency—a "national conversation" on diversity, and greater attention to regional and popular culture. Cole is making it his mission to tackle what he calls Americans' "collective amnesia" about their history.

Himself a historian of art specializing in the Renaissance, Cole emphasizes the urgency of addressing Americans' ignorance of their country's past. "Unlike a monarchy, a democracy is not automatically self-perpetuating," he says. "History and values have to be renewed from generation to generation."

And evidence abounds that the necessary process of renewal has somehow stalled. According to a 2000 survey by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, 99 percent of seniors at America's top 55 colleges recognized Beavis and Butthead, but only 23 percent could identify James Madison as the Father of the Constitution. The 2001 National Assessment for Education Progress survey found that a majority of high school seniors thought Germany, Japan, or Italy was an ally of the United States in World War II.

And in *What Americans Know About Politics*, published in 1996, political scientists Michael X. Delli Carpini and Scott Keeter cite some similarly dreary findings: Forty-five percent of Americans attributed the phrase "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs" to the U.S. Constitution rather than to Karl Marx's *Communist Manifesto*. Nearly a third of Americans thought the Constitution guaranteed every American a job, 42 percent thought it guaranteed health care, and 75 percent thought it guaranteed a high school education.


Bruce Cole

This is the rich vein that *Tonight Show* host Jay Leno taps with his candid-camera man-on-the-street interview routine, "Jay-walking." Leno has discovered that, while most people are hard-pressed to identify a picture of George Washington, FDR, or Ronald Reagan, almost everyone knows Joe Camel and Mr. Peanut.

Cole says his agency's "We the People" initiative will help remedy this. One component consists of grants to curators, librarians, and scholars whose projects examine "significant events and themes in our nation's history and culture." Grants can go to both public and private institutions, as well as to individuals.

The second component is an annual history essay contest for high school juniors on the "Idea of America"—not the student's private idea of America, or his feelings about America, but the idea itself as it has been expressed in American institutions and experience. The first winner, Morghan Transue of Kendall Park, New Jersey, was awarded the prize of $5,000 on May 1, on the occasion of the annual "Heroes of History" lecture that is the program's third component. The inaugural lecture was delivered by Robert V. Remini, biographer of Andrew Jackson, Daniel Webster, and Henry Clay and professor emeritus at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He spoke about the Founding Fathers.

Describing the initiative to Congress in March, Cole stressed that it has acquired a new urgency since September 11. "The terrorist attacks were an assault on our principles, our heritage of freedom, our history, and our culture," he said. "To defend our country we must first understand it."

Cole is at one with the White House in underscoring this need. As President Bush said at the ceremony unveiling the history initiative last year, "American children are not born knowing what they should cherish—are not born knowing why they should cherish American values. A love of democratic principles must be taught."

It especially needs to be taught to the MTV generation, at a time when not a single Ivy League college requires a course in American history for graduation. Yet there is a popular appetite for history—witness the success of the History Channel and the recent best-selling biographies of John Adams and Theodore Roosevelt. Recognizing this, Bruce Cole insists his agency can help provide the young more nourishing fare than reality TV. ♦

Rachel DiCarlo is an editorial assistant at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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The Hardest Job in the Army

Meet the men and women of Mortuary Affairs

By Matt Labash

"And so we brought our dead man home. Flew his body back, faxed the obits to the local papers, called the priests, the sexton, the florists and stonecutter. We act out things we cannot put in words."

—Thomas Lynch, *The Undertaking*

Camp Wolf, Kuwait

The backstretch of the Kuwait International Airport, like much of the rest of the country, is ugly. It is barren and arid, and the frequent sandstorms that whip through make the entire place look like it's been breaded in a Shake 'N' Bake bag. Yet there is a special pocket in this otherwise nondescript military tent city. It is a place where cause becomes effect, where military service is considered sacrament, where all the editorial-page flapjaw about "sacrifice" becomes haltingly, disturbingly real. It is the Theater Mortuary Evacuation Point.

At a gate on the camp's outskirts, I roll up in an SUV with Army Col. Richard Dillon, who oversees the 377th Theater Support Command, under which fall the Mortuary Affairs personnel from the 54th Quartermaster Company and two reserve units. Though we are comfortably in the rear, where quartermasters like Dillon usually do the unglamorous work of getting infantry types their bullets and beans, Dillon has brought along a sidearm—as mandated by the Army ever since a civilian contractor was murdered by a terrorist not far from here in January. "We took custody of the body to enable us to process his remains with the same dignity and respect of each of our own soldiers," says Dillon. Since that day, the men and women of Mortuary Affairs have grown considerably busier.

Dillon is tall with a thin mustache. He speaks in the plodding, carefully measured cadences of a computer specialist, which is what this reservist is in his civilian life—a life he hasn't known since his deployment in December 2001. "It's been over a year since I've heard a dog bark," he laments (although he re-upped for another stint when his initial year-long assignment expired). His wife and children live back in New Orleans, but he speaks in the geographically indistinguishable accent shared by many military lifers who, moving every two or three years, never get the chance to settle into regionalisms.

At the gate, we come to a crossroads. One road goes to the military side of the airport. The other is traveled only by Mortuary Affairs personnel, who bring along the bodies of deceased soldiers in order to send them home. Dillon made sure his people had access to a separate entrance, he says, because nothing shakes an incoming soldier's morale like seeing one of his fallen comrades returning home in a refrigeration truck.

The soldiers live in the space where they work. Descending into this subculture, one expects a certain amount of *M*A*S*H*-like black humor, for coping purposes, if no other. In advance of this visit, I have read a Gannett reporter's account of his travels with a forward collection team (the Mortuary Affairs troops who travel to the forward areas, so that individual units can drop off their deceased). Their helmet graffiti read "Don't Be the One" and "Smell the Dead." Here at Camp Wolf, these young soldiers also have pressure releases. They laugh about overweight reservists and assign vicious nicknames—"Juggernaut" to the sergeant with the large head, "PW" (for "P— Whipped") for the officer they heard chatting up his girlfriend on the phone. But there is one thing the company commander, Capt. Brooks Brenkus, says is never, ever done: "We don't joke at all about remains."

Brenkus speaks with a clipped, bolt-action intensity, and still looks like the multisport high school athlete he was back in Maryland, even though he's a grand old man at 27 years of age. That's a year older than the average age of the deceased coming through. (Of the 128 publicly identified American dead—there are 140 total as of May 5—a fifth weren't old enough to order a drink in a bar.)

Matt Labash is senior writer at The Weekly Standard.

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Brenkus knows about death—his father died when he was 15, forcing him to be "the rock of the family." And he has spent plenty of time in bars, where he has heard people talk about war.

Under the influence of beer and bravado, people say stupid things. He hears it all the time. He hears them talk about "acceptable risks," and about the relatively few casualties—"it could've been worse." He is just waiting, upon his return, to hear someone say, "Tough break—those who died signed up for the job," or, "It serves them right, they should've never been in Iraq." If he does, he says, "you can come visit me in jail, because I would lose it without thinking twice." For this conflict is not something he's just watched on TV. "I've seen the face of nearly every person that's died in this war," he says. "It's more than just another war to me."

The dead leave this military life just as they came in: in a blizzard of paperwork. They come out of the refrigeration trucks (called "reefers") usually in body bags—which the ever-euphemistic Army now calls "human remains pouches." They are brought in through a reception area, where there is a painting done by one of Brenkus's men, inspired by a picture Brenkus brought back from Normandy. It depicts a fallen soldier, sprawled next to his M-16, with an angel ministering to him. It is inscribed: "Think not only upon their passing, remember the glory of their spirit."

PFC Blanka Stratford

The painting in the 92 Mikes' reception area

They are brought through swinging doors to the back of the processing tent, which by necessity is constantly Cloroxed and extremely well air-conditioned, since the smell would be unbearable in the 120-degree heat. The Mortuary Affairs specialists here are not morticians—the actual embalming and cosmetic work gets done at Dover Air Force Base, in Delaware. Personal effects come back with the deceased, attached in a pouch to their wrists—assuming they still have wrists. All of this must be catalogued, and scrupulously accounted for. There is paperwork for everything. There is the DD-2064, the overseas death certificate, and the DD-894, the fingerprint record, which includes a space where "amputations, abnormalities, missing fingers and/or dermis" can be noted. They catalog it all, from the dead soldier's X-rays to his tattoos.

In another tent is a personal effects depot, where I watch a team go through belongings that a soldier left behind at camp—in this case, it was pocket change. They separate high-dollar items from low-dollar items, military possessions from civilian ones. Back in the processing tent is where they sort through whatever came in with the deceased. Every dollar will be registered by serial number, to make sure it all gets back to the family. All possessions are sent to a stateside depot to be cleaned. Nothing with blood on it will be forwarded to the family. Neither will anything that has the remotest possibility of upsetting a survivor—say, a photo of a woman other than the deceased's wife. To sequester these sensitive belongings, the Mortuary Affairs specialists, nicknamed "92 Mikes" after their Army job classification number, must fill out more paperwork. "There's a certificate of destruction that has to be filled out," says Col. Dillon. All of these records will be kept forever, since they still get family queries going back to Vietnam, Korea, and even the Civil War.

From there, the deceased are put in metal transfer cases and placed in refrigeration trailers until they can be flown out. Before they leave, they have ice poured on their torsos, to keep them between 34 and 38 degrees. Actually freezing the remains, says Dillon, would "make the mortician's job almost impossible." The bodies are strapped into the cases, and molded plastic headrests are placed beneath the heads to prepare them for the trip to Germany or Dover. Before they leave, they go through Evacuation Section Quality Control. Everything is triple-checked. And all of this, the 92 Mikes will tell you with solemn pride, is done around the clock—sleep is often not an option—so that they can get their fallen comrades on a plane within 10 hours.

If you ask them why the rush—the dead will remain that way—they recoil. They live by a credo you'll read as the sign-off on all of Col. Dillon's e-mails: "There is no greater honor than to serve those who have made the ulti-

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mate sacrifice." In the grim arithmetic of a 92 Mike, a speedy return = honoring the dead.

In a group interview in the reception area, I learn more about these unique soldiers. Some want to be morticians or forensic scientists, others just want to pay off their college. Some of them got into this lightly, but nobody stays in that way. It is the one military occupational specialty that the Army permits you to beg out of with no recriminations if you feel you can't hack it. A litmus test, of sorts, comes during training back in Richmond, Va., where prospective 92 Mikes spend time in the mortuary and see all manner of death. Not that it can really prepare them for the field experience. In training, "they'll bring out a decomposed body, so you can see the severities of death," says Specialist Kyna Bullock, who at 24 is already a two-war veteran, having done the same job in Afghanistan. "But it's just a guy off the street. It changes everything when you see somebody come through here that has on a uniform like you, that lost their life fighting for a cause. I've been to morgues several times. But the first time I processed the remains of an American soldier, I can still remember his name. . . . You can get a remain in and it may not look like that person. But when you look at their ID card, you look at their dog tags, you go through their wallet and see pictures of their family. . . . It changes things a lot."

Capt. Brooks Brenkus

PFC Blanka Stratford

The Mortuary Affairs team is a close-knit lot, not only because of the nature of their jobs, but because many regular soldiers think it is bad juju to associate with them during times of war—a bit like asking the Grim Reaper to ride shotgun. "They don't even want to understand what you do," says Brenkus. "That's not a thought a soldier wants to have. I respect that feeling. I would feel the same way." Temperamentally, there are plenty of self-described outsiders. "I was the weirdest kid on the block," says Staff Sergeant Gregory Jones. "I dragged roadkill home—my mother would literally hit me with a broom to get it off the porch." But most don't seem to have an obsession with death. "We're a very eclectic bunch," says Bullock. "We're all pretty weird, but we're weird in our own way." Oddly, the importance of the job seems to spoil anyone for other military occupational specialties. The 92 Mikes have a high reenlistment rate. But there are still plenty for whom it becomes overwhelming.

Brenkus says it sometimes becomes too big a load to shoulder. His people see "bodies burnt, mutilated, beaten to death, filled with maggots, shot to pieces . . . but they go on working knowing that they will be the last people to ever see the body again. . . . You can [only] deflect that emotion for so long." While they have teams of mental health professionals at their disposal, whom they are encouraged to chat with regularly, Brenkus says that realistically, he will lose 25 percent of his people after this deployment. Back home, he worked with psychiatrists from the Army's medical headquarters at Walter Reed Hospital to develop pre- and post-deployment treatment plans, after tallying over 20 soldiers who needed treatment for depression or for making "suicide gestures." "The truth is," he says, "we all have issues. You can't see what we have and not hurt." Even though he can't imagine doing another job, he says, "I will not miss coming from chow to the stench of death or aura of sadness and grief that surrounds that processing tent."

While you might expect them to build up a doctor's desensitization to pain and death, just from the frequency with which they encounter it, I don't sense this. They never see the one thing a doctor does: a patient who can leave of his own accord. They witness the worst that mankind has to offer, seeing what combat looks like when it all goes wrong, as it inevitably does. Over the last two months, each has made memories he'll never be able to shake. For one soldier, it was reading the helmet graffiti of a fallen Marine, which said: "I fight, so you don't have to." For Staff Sergeant Jones, it was the day NBC's David Bloom, embedded with the 3rd Infantry Division, came through. "He risked his life out there, on the front lines with the 3rd ID," Jones marvels. "This guy came into our living rooms every weekend [on the Saturday *Today Show*] with Soledad O'Brien. Maybe you want to meet him. Maybe you don't. But it's strange to meet him in here. That was difficult."

Jones once worked in a civilian mortuary but says the difference is striking. "To see the agony some of these sol-

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diers went through, you won't ever forget this. Never, ever, ever. I don't care if you have Alzheimer's." In the civilian world, he says, "You don't have mortar rounds out there on the streets, hand grenades, land mines. You get angry because of the conditions they come in. You wonder if they were captured first, and then this was done to them. That's where it gets personal. Because we're soldiers. You put this on," he says, patting his uniform. "You become a family, see what I mean? A nation is judged on how we take care of our dead, and we do the best job throughout the world in handling our dead."

And to their credit, not just our dead. Already, Col. Dillon is working on a plan to catalog the remains and personal effects of the Iraqi dead, as well—then to bury them at their place of death in accordance with their Islamic customs. This is partly, he says, to prove to them "we're not infidels." And it is partly, as Bullock, who handled enemy dead in Afghanistan, says, that "it's still a remain. It's still somebody's family. You have to treat that remain with utmost respect, because that's our job, no matter who it is. It could be Saddam himself. If it's a remain, we process it and do it with respect."

A week later and half a world away, I shoot up the Coastal Highway of Delaware from Rehoboth Beach, where yuppie parents stuff their children with Thai food and Grotto's Pizza. It's a relief to be back in the land of plenty, spying crab-houses and Four Gospel churches, Harley shops and spring produce stands promising strawberries, sweet corn, and "candylopes."

I make my way up to Dover AFB, which houses the Charles C. Carson Center for Mortuary Affairs. For the fallen soldier, it is the last stop before going home to their families. It is here that active duty and reservists from all four branches, along with medical examiners and morticians, finish the work that their counterparts in Kuwait began. It is the only Department of Defense port mortuary in the continental United States, and DoD policy prohibits me from going to the morgue when deceased are present. Though Baghdad fell two weeks earlier, it makes no difference to the dead, who are still arriving at a semi-regular, albeit slower, clip.

I'm taken to another office building to do a group interview with an array of mortuary staffers, but before we start, I excuse myself to the men's room. Where the urinal puck would usually be is a sticker of Osama bin Laden with the inscription, "In your face." It's small wonder that personnel here like to piss on him. They have had to clean up his handiwork again and again: from the U.S.S. *Cole* and embassy bombings, to Khobar Towers, to the 9/11 Pentagon attack.

Dover is famous for its C-5 planes, which are big enough to transport half a dozen Greyhound buses or 48 Cadillacs. They help provide one-third of the nation's strategic airlift capability, but the ice-filled metal transfer cases are what we gather to discuss. The planes carrying the dead come at all hours. To weary morgue staffers, it seems like it's always in the middle of the night. Though there are no onlookers, the arrivals are met by an honor guard for what is called a "dignified transfer." Before anyone touches the transfer cases, however, a senior officer, a chaplain, and Dover's acting mortuary director Bill Zwicharowski, a former Marine whom everyone calls Ziggy, enter the plane, making sure the cases are flag-draped, draping them if they aren't.

From the time the chaplain says a prayer and the honor guard boards the plane to transfer the cases to hearses which then take them a half-mile away to the mortuary, there are but two goals: to positively identify the remains and to return them home to their families as quickly as possible. "A minute, an hour, a day, to a husband or wife is like an eternity," says Ziggy. "We've actually driven a hearse from here to Vermont because we could get it there quicker than flying. It may not seem like much, but when the family says, 'Can you get them here before dark today?' and the only way to do it is drive them by hearse, guess what? You drive them by hearse."

The remains go first to the medical examiner. While the families have been notified by this point that it is believed their loved one has perished, the military takes no chances, making sure to positively identify the deceased either through fingerprinting, dental records, or, if all else fails, DNA. The bodies are also screened for explosive ordnance, which is sometimes still embedded in the corpse. Medical examiners like Navy Cmdr. Craig Mallak don't just do identifications. ("We're going to do our level best to account for everybody. If we can, nobody will ever go into the Tomb of the Unknown again.") They also assemble the pieces that tell the story. "Sometimes we get portions of bodies," Mallak says. "Sometimes aircraft pieces. Everything is tracked all the way through the whole process." It is paramount, they say, to get every piece that belongs to every individual identified—not only for burial, but to fill in the gaps. Occasionally, after enough time goes by, a family member wants to know what really happened, and it is the medical examiner who will be able to piece together the story: for instance, whether a driver was shot before his vehicle crashed.

Around here, everyone has his taboos and superstitions, his rituals and preferences. Some stay glued to the television to see who'll be coming through next. Some won't turn it on. Some talk to the dead, some won't go near them. For some, especially the medical science and

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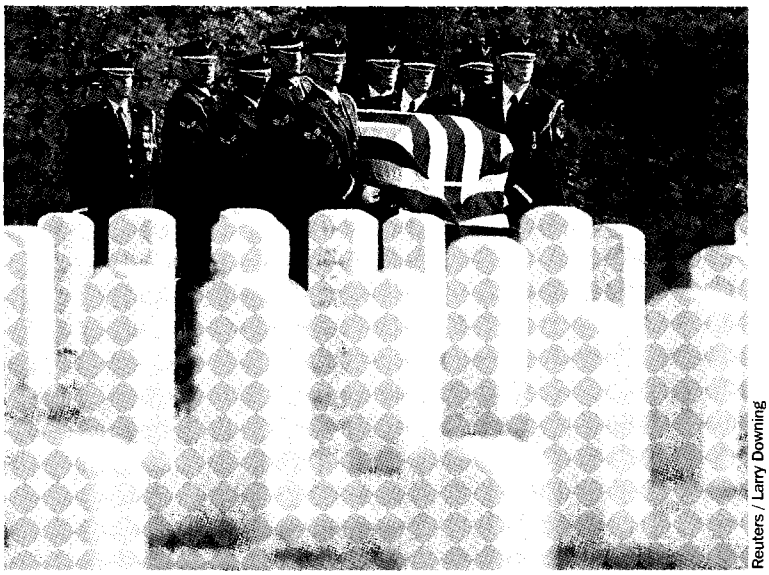
mortician types, dealing with the bodies isn't nearly as difficult as rifling through the personal effects. "I personally," says Ziggy, "would rather—and doc would too—work with anatomy as opposed to reading half-written letters, or seeing baby pictures, or a little boy's shoe. [Personal Effects] is a tough place to work." Others want, even need, to make a connection to the deceased. Staff Sergeant Curtis Tilghman, who assists with embalming, takes regular trips to Personal Effects. "I'll walk back through there, just to look at a picture or something," he says. "I don't know—sometimes the names just stick with me. I'll hear that name again. It just makes me work harder. Because I used to be infantry, so when I see a lot of those guys come through here, I take it, you know, personal. I always say to myself, 'That could've been me.' I'm blessed."

From the medical examiner, it is off to Ziggy's side of the operation. There, the body is embalmed and fitted with a new, individually tailored uniform that contains every rank and decoration for which the deceased is eligible. Just as important, Ziggy goes to work doing the cosmetology and restorative art that can make the difference between an open and closed casket. "We go to extremes to try to offer the family some viewability—extremes that probably the civilian sector would not;" the former mortuary owner says. The military has different classifications of viewability. One of them is called "head wrap and dress"—in which, when damage has been done to the head or face that cannot be compensated for with a mortician's gifts, the head is wrapped in clean gauze, so that the family can just see the body.



Reuters / Larry Downing

USAF Maj. Gregory L. Stone, carried by an honor guard, April 17, 2003

At first, it sounds like a morbid extreme to go to in the elusive attempt to gain "closure"—a word that one mortuary staffer after another uses incessantly, both here and in Kuwait. But Ziggy tells a story, from when he was a mortician in the civilian world, that illustrates its importance. Years ago, a good friend of his was killed, and his body wasn't fit for viewing. During the funeral service, his friend's young daughter approached him and wanted to see her dad. He balked, but she insisted. "What if I let you hold his hand?" he asked. She agreed. He opened his friend's casket, just a little, "and she held her dad's hand and talked to him for 20 minutes," he says. "It could've been all day for all I cared. She felt and touched and made contact with her father. So when someone asks me why would you do it, it's because you're seeing your son, you're touching his hands, you're seeing his uniform on him, as opposed to a metal casket."

Sometimes, it's not just the family members who need closure. At Camp Wolf in Kuwait, I met Staff Sergeant Carlos Roman, a former infantryman who now works the last leg on the Kuwaiti end of the Mortuary Affairs line. He double- and triple-checks that everything has been properly prepared. Then he puts his fallen comrades on a plane and prays over their transfer cases. Roman speaks with a thick Puerto Rican accent, and has a lineman's build, a bristly high-and-tight, and a pair of hard brown eyes that could intimidate an enemy into surrender.

Often, the easiest way to do his job is to make those eyes stop seeing. "When we get ready to work," he says, "It's like I'm standing here, and it's a different person who steps out. I'm seeing, but I'm not seeing what I'm seeing. I'm just there to do my job. And once I finish doing it, and I'm done with it all, they're in the transfer case, they're sealed, they're in the plane, they're gone—that's when I take my moment alone. Have I cried and shed tears out here? Yes I have. Many nights. But I've already said that regardless of what I see, I'm not going to stop working. Because I'm still here. My family has the privilege of still having me. The other family members of these service members that I'm seeing don't have that. It's not going to be possible, you understand? Some of them are just not going to be able to be seen. And I'm the one that has the final image of them—me. Somebody that doesn't even know them. I feel bad. Who am I to be able to see them in this last condition they're in? On the other hand, I wouldn't want my family to see me like that. So in a sense, I take that last look. And when I get my moment, I do my thing. I speak to God in my own way. I say the things I need to say. And I pray for all of them. I pray for their families." ♦

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The Happy Cold Warrior

The first 90 years of Arnold Beichman

By David Brooks

In 1927, young Arnold Beichman went to Yankee Stadium to see Babe Ruth play. After the game, Beichman hung around the players' exit to get another glimpse of the Babe, who eventually emerged from the clubhouse, resplendent in a belted camel-hair coat, and climbed into the driver's seat of his big Packard touring car. Young Arnold surged from the crowd, held up a program, and asked for an autograph. Babe Ruth turned and barked: "Get the hell off the running board, kid." Immediately, Beichman became the celebrity of his neighborhood. He was the kid the Babe had spoken to. How had the Babe said it? people wanted to know, when they saw him on the street. What were his words exactly?

Arnold Beichman turns 90 this month. Babe Ruth was the first of hundreds of notable historical figures Beichman has met in the course of his life—from Harry Truman and John F. Kennedy to Vietnam's Ngo Dinh Diem, from Joe DiMaggio to Frantz Fanon and Michel Aflaq, founder of the Baath party and ideological guru to Saddam Hussein. This is why people go into journalism, to meet the key people and be there for the key events of the age. But Beichman's life also has a theme and a cause: anti-communism. As long as the Soviet Union existed, Arnold Beichman was there working for its destruction. This is why people go into opinion journalism, to be part of some large intellectual fight that brings one's life gloriously to a point.

Beichman in the White House

Beichman was born May 17, 1913, on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. His father was a cotton goods peddler and storekeeper, and his parents spoke Yiddish at home. His father barely spoke English, but he did speak Russian, Polish, Ukrainian, and Italian (that last so he could do business with the Italians who lived around Mulberry Street in Little Italy).

Beichman read his way through the local public library and edited his high school paper. He noticed the basketball players were nice to him because they wanted to get their names in the paper. "Suddenly I realized what power I had. That's what got me into journalism." He was admitted to Columbia College, which then had a 10 percent Jewish quota, and became the first non-fraternity, Jewish student to be made editor of the college paper. One day, in the early thirties, the ambassador from Nazi Germany was scheduled to speak at the college. A group of Communist students marched into the office of the school paper and demanded that Beichman write an editorial saying that the ambassador shouldn't be permitted to speak. Beichman said innocently that he wouldn't do it, on free speech grounds, and also because the ambassador from the Soviet Union had recently been given a Columbia podium. The Communists exploded and called Beichman a red-baiter, the first but not the last time that charge would be thrown at him. "I was naive," Beichman recalls. "And if you are naive you can't be a Communist."

While at Columbia, Beichman attended a conference of student journalists in Washington, at the then-segregated Mayflower Hotel. Some students from black colleges were there, and they took part in the dancing at one of the evening parties. Southern students surrounded them and chased them from the floor. Beichman led a delegation of northern students who threatened to pull out of the conference unless apologies were made and the black students were permitted to attend the final banquet. They got their way, but the black students, along with Beichman, were seated at a small table near the kitchen and the waiters

David Brooks is a senior editor at The Weekly Standard.

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refused to serve them, finally pulling out a black cook to bring them their food.

The incident impressed a *New York Times* editor, who hired Beichman, after graduation, to do some freelance pieces. Beichman wrote for the *Times*, then *Newsday*, and finally was hired by *PM*, the legendary left-wing daily, which accepted no advertising because it didn't want the capitalist taint. Beichman was brought on by Jimmy Wechsler to fight off the staff Communists, who had been hired by Dashiell Hammett, Lillian Hellman, and Ralph Ingersoll, *PM*'s founder. "Brooklyngrad needs you!" Wechsler summoned. Beichman rose to become city editor and assistant managing editor, and thus took part in a series of ferocious battles for control of the news coverage, amid vicious attacks from the Communist press. One secretary disappeared and showed up later on the payroll of the New York office of the Soviet news agency, Tass. At one point Ingersoll got permission from Earl Browder, the head of the Communist party of the United States, to fire a few of the more incompetent Communists, just to preserve the paper's credibility.

Beichman (at left) with the FLN rebels in Algeria, 1957

It was during this period that Beichman did the most amazing thing: He became a fellow traveler. This was during the Spanish Civil War, the so-called national front period, when leftists and Communists worked together against Franco. Arnold did publicity for an outfit he knew was a front group, supposedly raising money for the anti-fascists in Spain. Eventually he deduced that not some of the money, but all the money being raised in the name of Spain was in fact going to the Communist party.

During World War II, Beichman published the first American reports of the Warsaw ghetto uprising, having found a man who had escaped from the battles and could provide maps and a firsthand account. After the war, he interviewed Holocaust survivors as they landed in New York. He came across one beautiful young woman who had seen her five children killed but who had been kept around to serve the Nazi officers. Beichman innocently asked her how she could have preserved the will to live after her children's murder. "That's what I cannot forgive God for," she replied. "You still want to live no matter what. But I will never have children. That I know."

Beichman was finally fired from *PM*, during yet another political skirmish, and went to work for a series of trade union papers. "The reason I stayed with the labor movement," Beichman says, "is that I regarded them and [labor leader] George Meany as the only people you could trust in the fight against communism. Intellectuals and General Motors and the U.S. Senate you couldn't trust. But Meany didn't budge."

Beichman had by this time become reasonably well known, and one day he received a note from Walter Winchell, the notorious gossip columnist. Winchell had been fed some of the details of Beichman's messy divorce, but had decided, for whatever reason, that he wasn't going to publish them, earning Beichman's lasting gratitude.

In 1949, Stalin launched a peace campaign, and a group of 800 intellectuals gathered at the Waldorf Astoria to call for the United States to endorse Soviet foreign policy. Beichman, Sidney Hook, James Burnham, Mary McCarthy, Dwight McDonald, and others organized a counterdemonstration. Through his connections with the hotel service workers' union, Beichman got the anti-Communist group a suite at the Waldorf, and they successfully undermined the conference, with Hook and others embarrassing the Soviet delegation with uncomfortable questions and harsh arguments.

In the 1950s and '60s, Beichman was one of the New York intellectuals who worked to delegitimize communism. "A staunch anti-communism was the great moral-political imperative of our age," Diana Trilling once declared, and that became the credo of Beichman's professional life. He headed the American Committee of the Congress of Cultural Freedom (refusing to accept what turned out to be the CIA money that eventually tainted the international branch of the Congress). He fell in with the *Partisan Review* crowd, and became friendly with Irving Kristol, whom he regards as his most important intellectual influence.

One story captures the ethos of that clique in those days. One afternoon, Beichman was walking home when his wife Carroll came rushing out onto the street saying that Diana Trilling had just called, and Arnold should hur-

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ry over to *Commentary* editor Eliot Cohen's apartment, for something terrible had happened. Beichman arrived to find that Cohen had committed suicide by placing a plastic bag over his head. His body was lying in the kitchen. Soon word spread, and people started pouring into the apartment. Shocked by the sight of the body, they started drinking. The body could not be moved until the coroner arrived, but friends kept arriving, pouring themselves cocktails, and even bringing in roast beef sandwiches. At first, the conversation was about Cohen, but then it drifted to so and so's review of such and such, and so and so's essay about this and that. "It became like an unusual cocktail party," Beichman remembers, with Cohen's body there in the kitchen.

But Beichman was not merely a New York intellectual. After World War II, he was plagued by guilt that he had not served his country in combat. He had tried to get into the Army Air Force, and then into the Army, but he was too old and had children. After the war, in compensation, he sought out war zones. Writing pieces for publications like *Newsweek* and the *Christian Science Monitor*, he covered wars in Yemen, Algeria, the Congo, and Vietnam. During the 1950s, he reported on stories across the Middle East, visiting Baghdad, Tehran, and Damascus.

In 1959, he interviewed Diem in Vietnam. Then in 1964, he wrote an essay from Vietnam called "As the Cookie Crumbles" based on interviews with U.S. military officials. He argued that the United States was unprepared for a guerrilla war and that it would take 10 years to get out. Also that year, he filed a story from Saigon saying that the Johnson administration was planning to begin a bombing campaign against the North after the November election. The story appeared on the front page of the *New York Herald Tribune* the day of the Republican Convention. LBJ flew into a rage, calling Dean Rusk and Robert MacNamara, demanding that Beichman be kicked out of Vietnam (Johnson was finally dissuaded).

Then, in the mid-1960s, Beichman says, "I decided I was getting dumber," so he went back to Columbia to get a Ph.D. "The only wisdom I have to impart is that everybody at the age of 50 should go back to school for a graduate degree."

Beichman wrote a book about the United Nations and—this being Columbia in the late 1960s—found himself again in the middle of the action. Knowing that he had been a student radical, some of the 1960s radicals came to him for advice. "What's your ideology?" Beichman asked, but of course they had none. Beichman was also appalled by the cowardice of much of the faculty, who hissed administrators trying, belatedly, to preserve order. "I remember warning Jacques Barzun," Beichman recounts. "They just didn't know what was going on under their noses, any more than the *ancien régime* knew before the Bastille. They didn't know how revolutions began."

Beichman went on to write a book called *Nine Lies About America* defending the United States from the waves of anti-Americanism. During his book tour he found himself on the *Tonight Show* with Johnny Carson along with the actor Jon Voight. Carson asked Voight what he thought of Beichman's pro-American arguments. "I'm frightened by America today," Voight responded. To which Beichman—by now an old pro at winning debates—turned to the audience and asked, "Is anybody else afraid of America?" to which the audience roared, "NO!"

I met Beichman in 1984 at the Hoover Institution, where he is still a fellow. I was 23 at the time, but sensed immediately that here was a guy with more youthful energy than anybody in the place. *Time* magazine once called him "the hyperthyroid Arnold Beichman," which is not too far off. For the past quarter century he has poured out a series of essays, reviews, and columns (for THE WEEKLY STANDARD and the *Washington Times*, among others), generally on communism, tyranny, and anti-Americanism. In the late 1980s, he finally visited Moscow, having earlier been denied a visa by the Andropov regime ("Everybody here is a Communist," he observed, his eyes wide open). Then in 1991, he saw his life's work come to fruition with the collapse of the Soviet Union. That year, he wrote a column calling for November 9, the day the Berlin Wall fell, to be celebrated each year as World Freedom Day. Last year, President George W. Bush followed up on the suggestion and officially made November 9 a day of recognition of our victory in the Cold War.

Beichman has recently written quite a bit about the war on terror. There are similarities between the Cold War debates and the terror war debates, but as Beichman points out, there is a crucial difference: This time, there is no central enemy authority, there is no global apparat.

Beichman and his glamorous wife, Carroll, an intellectual and dry wit in her own right, now spend their summers on their farm in western Canada (Carroll is Canadian) and their winters at the Hoover Institution. They breeze through Washington a couple of times a year and take a few of us out to dinner. Sometimes they talk about their kids, who are scattered around the world, or Arnold will mention his lifelong hobby, flying (he once co-piloted a twin-engine Cessna across the Atlantic), or they will unfurl yet another adventure from some distant land or recount a meeting with some great figure from history. If Arnold is at somebody's house and there are children around, he retells the Babe Ruth story. As a result, there are scores of homes across the country where he is best known, as he was in 1927, as the kid who was spoken to by Babe Ruth. ♦

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ENJOY LIFE—WITHOUT ARTHRITIS PAIN!

By Alice E. Jacob

Baltimore, MD-Too many of us believe that the debilitating pain of arthritis is a necessary consequence of aging. To say it as bluntly as possible—and I'm ready to back it up with all the proof you need—"BULL!"

Plain and simple: arthritis pain can be prevented or reversed at any age, for anyone—from a high school athlete to a sedentary 80 year old. The proof is real and compelling. Whatever your age, whatever your activity level, past or present, you can make the pain stop, or never give it a chance to get started.

If like many of my friends and colleagues, you fall into the category of "doubting Thomas," let me invite you to unleash this powerful approach to pain-free living at absolutely no risk or obligation. (More on that in a moment.)

Everything you need to know about waging a successful attack against arthritis is detailed in this amazing book, *How To Fight Arthritis & Win*. I don't use the word amazing lightly, but this book goes beyond any approach to arthritis ever before published or compiled. It takes one tack and one tack only—WHAT'S BEEN PROVEN TO WORK. *How to Fight Arthritis & Win* is filled with specific recommendations that have brought relief to thousands upon thousands of arthritis sufferers. And equally phenomenal, its strategies and remedies have rescued thousands from what they had previously been led to believe—"arthritis pain comes with growing old."

This book is written to be used. It's written for every day readers...every day arthritis sufferers...every day Americans who want to live pain free. It will become THE resource you refer to and recommend to family and friends. Let me give you a few examples why:

• **You don't have to change your life** to enjoy relief or ward off pain. Doing a few exercises a day...adding or eliminating even one type of food...taking a breakthrough over-the-counter supplement—any one of these strategies—can make a world of difference. In a matter of weeks, chronic, debilitating pain disappears or becomes a minor, now-and-then pang.

• The practices and remedies suggested are **easy to follow**. Recommended foods are available in any supermarket. And virtually all the supplements are on the shelves of your local pharmacy or health food store.

• The book's **best-selling author, William L. Fischer,** has been on a lifelong quest to help Americans take control of their bodies and their lives. He has written 13 other books, which have sold hundreds of thousands of copies. Here are the facts, the figures and the findings about arthritis pain remedies—many known and successfully used for centuries. They are part and parcel of complementary medicine—the other half of the good-health equation that conventional doctors often chose to ignore, despite its track record.

I said a moment ago that I wanted to eliminate any doubts you might have. So, as publisher of *How to Fight Arthritis & Win* I am making it available to **you risk free for ONE FULL YEAR**. Use it for a whole year, and if you do not find genuine arthritis relief and prevention from its suggestions, then I insist you return it to us for a total refund. Let me give you a preview of the hundreds of easy-to-do suggestions that await you:

> ***"Our son has been very concerned about my arthritis and has researched many health books. He is a professor in a University in Sendai, Japan. He mailed me your book, feeling it was the most promising of the many he has read. I am 3/4 of the way through "How to Fight Arthritis & Win" and I can't put it down—the extra books I am buying will be sent to my sister and a friend."***
>
> **Mary Lee**

—A foolproof, two-pronged approach to beating arthritis. Attack it from "the inside out" with the right foods and dietary supplements for you. Attack it from "the outside in" with exercise, bodywork and topical formulas.

—Step-by-step guidelines for creating your personal arthritis management plan. You, the one who knows yourself and your body best, decide what you do and what you don't do—not the FDA or any other beuracracy. Mixing and matching the recommendations outlined in this book, you can create a fully customized plan that puts you on the road to an arthritis-free life well into your 80's, 90's, or beyond.

—Simple-to-follow exercises that ease pain and restore your spirits—some literally take seconds. You'll discover how to nip stress, a major trigger of arthritis flare-ups, in the bud with spillover benefits to your heart and lungs.

—Case studies that provide facts and hope on stopping arthritis No namby/pamby fake-feel-good stuff here. Just example after example of successes and how you can adapt them to your lifestyle and your personal arthritis fighting strategies.

—A quick checklist to keep your body lubricated—an essential for fighting pain. Like any machine, without proper lubrication, the body is in danger of serious malfunction. In humans, that spells arthritis pain. You'll learn which foods and topicals provide and restore much-needed lubricants.

—A compendium of Eastern food cures that strengthen joints and ease pain. Many remedies, such as green tea, mushrooms, tofu and chili peppers have track records of success that long pre-date Western medicine. Add one or more of them to your diet and feel the difference.

—A detailed analysis of arthritis-fighting supplements. Different supplements offer different relief. Some work best in combination. For example, glucosamine can do wonders for cartilage but taken alone it won't make your pain disappear. You'll discover which supplements to take. How often to take them. And in what combination.

As you can see, there are many reasons for you to take me up on my invitation to try *How to Fight Arthritis & Win* for one year, risk-free. But none is more important than preserving your quality of life not just now, but 10, 15, 20 years from now. That's exactly what this book does. It shows you how to live without arthritis, however long you live. So please order now.

To get your copy of *How To Fight Arthritis & Win* call **1-888-821-3609 and ask for code PD53** or visit our website at www.agorahealthbooks.com/we7. Or write "Fight Arthritis—Dept. PD53" on a piece of paper with your name, address and phone number (in case we have a question about your order) and mail it with a check for $19.95 plus $5 for shipping and handling to:

Agora Health Books
Dept. PD53
P.O. Box 925
Frederick, Md. 21705-9838

How to Fight Arthritis & Win WILL make a difference in your life. It will stop or prevent arthritis pain whatever your age. Please take me up on my one-year, risk free invitation and order today.

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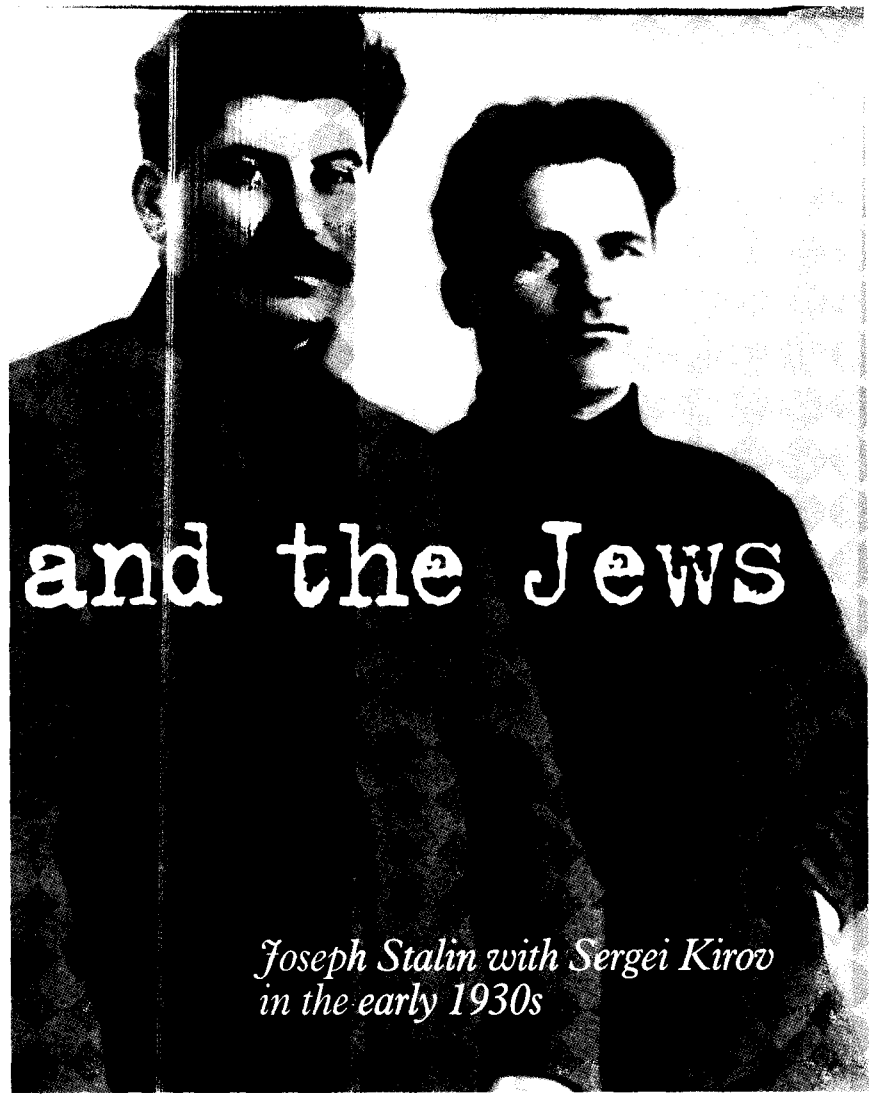
Stalin and the Jews

The Doctors' Plot was the beginning of the Communists' Final Solution

By Stephen Schwartz



Joseph Stalin with Sergei Kirov in the early 1930s

CORBIS

There's nothing new about the upsurge in recent months of leftist theories about Jewish conspiracies, particularly in Europe. Anti-Semitism has long been established in the history of the radical left. It reached its peak in the Soviet repression and mass murder of Jewish Bolsheviks during the 1920s and 1930s. And it found tragic repetition in the early 1950s, when Joseph Stalin launched new purges against the Communist elite both in Moscow and in Eastern Europe.

Along with the purges went a pogrom directed at a group of Soviet doctors, many of them Jewish, as a pretext for wholesale deportation, and yet another effort at mass murder, of the Jews. The episode, known as "the Doctors' Plot," represented the last convulsion of Stalinism in its most extreme, pathological form. This year—on the fiftieth anniversary of the Soviet dictator's death—Jonathan Brent and Vladimir P. Naumov have published *Stalin's Last Crime: The Plot Against the Jewish Doctors 1948-1953*. Brent is the head of Yale University Press and best known for directing the outstanding "Annals of Communism" series issued by Yale, which translates and annotates archival documents. Naumov is a leading Russian historian and former state official. Together, their scholarship makes Stalin's homicidal, Judeophobic intentions undeniable.

Stalin's Last Crime
The Plot Against the Jewish Doctors 1948-1953
by Jonathan Brent and Vladimir P. Naumov
HarperCollins, 399 pp., $26.95

The essence of *Stalin's Last Crime* is stated in its preface: "Standing at the apex of the state, Stalin had absolute power. He had achieved this not because absolute power was conferred on him by the state, but because he succeeded in finding means to delegitimize the state itself. The Doctors' Plot became his most powerful weapon in the last years of his life in pursuing this end; it starkly demonstrates that Stalin's power did not derive from the state and its institutions but from the underlying system that allowed him to manipulate them."

Brent and Naumov present a great deal of new material in *Stalin's Last Crime*, including the suggestion that a real conspiracy brought about the end of the dictator, by putting warfarin, a colorless and tasteless rat poison, in his food. Even more remarkable is the book's revelation of Stalin's intention to use the Soviet Jews as a symbol of rapacious Western imperialism, espionage, and sabotage of the socialist paradise.

The extent of Stalin's anti-Semitism had already been established by a series of recent books. Even Robert Weinberg, author of a horrifyingly misguided 1998 volume called *Stalin's Forgotten Zion: Birobidzhan and the Making of a Soviet Jewish Homeland*, admits that Russian Jews themselves, in contrast with Western fellow travel-

Stephen Schwartz is a frequent contributor to The Weekly Standard.

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Stalin with Andrei Zhdanov in the late 1940s.

ers, considered Birobidzhan a terrible hoax. Stalin long intended to kill all the Jews.

As I have written elsewhere, he failed to do so only because of the inherent inefficiency of Soviet genocidal practices when applied to large ethnic groups such as the Jews and Ukrainians, who numbered in the millions. Stalin's murderous policies were more effective against smaller groups, such as the Muslim Chechens and Ingushes, Balkars, and Karachais—together with the Lamaist-Buddhist Kalmyks, the Muslim Crimean Tatars, the Soviet Kurds, the Christian Volga Germans, the Soviet Greeks, and the Soviet Koreans. These entire nations and ethnic groups were rounded up and deported to Central Asia *en masse* during World War II. Stalin's repression was especially devastating when applied to individuals, families, and classes leading a more atomized existence, such as Trotskyists, Communist party cadres, the so-called "kulaks," and many more besides.

By the late 1940s, it was the Jews' turn again. The Stalinist plot *against* the doctors—rather than, as was originally asserted by the Kremlin and its propagandists, a plot *by* the doctors—began with the mysterious death in 1948 of Andrei Zhdanov, a gruesome "junior Stalin" in his own right, who had been party boss in Leningrad during World War II and was infamous as the agent of a purge in Soviet cultural affairs. (He denounced, for instance, the great poet Anna Akhmatova as "a nun and a whore who combines harlotry with prayer.") It's possible that Zhdanov's demise itself was arranged to provide a pretext for a new massacre; such theories have always surrounded the death in 1934 of an earlier Leningrad party boss, Sergei M. Kirov, whose assassination was the signal for the beginning of the great purges. And there's even a motive: Zhdanov may have been selected for liquidation because of ideological misbehavior by his son.

In any event, his death in 1948 was followed by a denunciation, in which the Kremlin doctors were accused of deliberate malpractice. That was an explosive allegation in a Soviet system run on suspicion, but the charge eventually came to rest on Jewish doctors—and that claim was even more horrendous, drawing on the most ancient and dreadful libels against the Jewish people. Yet distrust of doctors had a long history in Soviet society; similar charges had also peppered the purges of the 1930s.

Eventually, thirty-seven prominent doctors were arrested, of whom seventeen were actually Jewish. The plot might have died there, but it was soon caught up in the agitation that followed the arrest in 1949 of the leading Soviet members of the Jewish Antifascist Committee. As described by Brent and Naumov, the trial of the committee members had an unpredictable aspect: "The government could not extract the necessary confessions from the defendants. This had never been a problem in the past." The defiance of the Jewish accused, themselves no angels in terms of their involvement in the crimes of the party-state, nonetheless spurred Stalin's paranoia to new extremes.

In the same period, North Korea attacked its southern neighbor, and the world held its breath, recognizing that if the United States did not defend South Korea, Stalin would be encouraged to invade Western Europe. In addition, the party leaders in Leningrad were purged and shot—suggesting that Stalin wished to repeat the massive bloodletting of the 1920s and 1930s, to be followed by a new war. Propaganda against America and Britain became even more shrill and feverish.

The members of the Jewish Antifascist Committee were executed in the late summer of 1952. Stalin then ordered his secret police to use "death blows" in interrogating arrested physicians. On January 13, 1953, the "Doctors' Plot" was unveiled in the Soviet media. Three weeks later, orders were issued for the construction of new prison camps in Central Asia and the far north. As the trials of the doctors approached, rumors circulated among the Russian Jews of an impending mass deportation to Siberia. Anti-Semitism reached extraordinary degrees. *Stalin's Last Crime* quotes a grimly humorous anecdote about a non-Jewish Russian, hounded by the secret police for allegedly hiding his

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Hebrew identity. The investigators sent an inquiry to the remote village, distant from Moscow, in which he had been born. The peasants there said they had never heard of the Jews before, writing back, "What is a Jew? Perhaps it's a new kind of cow. We have practically no cows left. They all died from lack of fodder."

And then, on March 5, 1953, Stalin himself died. By the end of the month, the prosecution of the doctors had ended and they were freed. The Russian Jews, Soviet society, and perhaps the world were saved from an inconceivable horror. Brent and Naumov comment, "Though it appears to have been the work of madness, the plot was slowly and meticulously constructed and, though it moved awkwardly like Frankenstein's monster, it developed a life of its own."

Excellent as *Stalin's Last Crime* is, it lacks extended discussion of the prostituted writers and intellectuals who served the Stalinist regime in the West, including the recently deceased Herbert Aptheker, loudly mourned as a scholar of African-American history by the *New York Times*. These wretches flocked to acclaim the "justice" of the doctors' arrests in the New York *Daily Worker* and other journals of the time. In a particularly nauseating example, the *Daily Worker* for several weeks advertised a New York Communist youth forum on "The Arrests in Moscow" (admission price 35 cents), with keynote speaker A.B. Magil, horribly nicknamed "the Rabbi," whose father had edited a standard Jewish prayer book.

What Brent and Naumov do give in *Stalin's Last Crime*, however, is an unforgettable picture of the man himself and the terror that surrounded him. How could it not have aimed, even at the end of his life, at yet another attempt to destroy more Jews? Stalin's longtime associate in revolutionary conspiracies and in power, Vyacheslav M. Molotov, was once asked whether Stalin ever appeared in his dreams, and he answered, "Sometimes. In extraordinary situations. . . . In a destroyed city. . . . I can't find a way out, and I meet him." ♦

Another Victim?

The mysterious death of Soviet defector Walter Krivitsky.

By Harvey Klehr

Walter Krivitsky was one of the most notable of the Soviet defectors of the 1930s. A high-ranking Russian intelligence officer who had been growing increasingly disaffected for several years, he finally broke ranks in 1937, went into hiding in France, and then managed to enter the United States. Articles based on his insights, ghostwritten by Isaac Don Levine, created a sensation when the *Saturday Evening Post* published them in 1939—sufficiently so that the American Communist party led a massive campaign of defamation against him, employing crude anti-Semitic stereotypes.

A Death in Washington
Walter G. Krivitsky and the Stalin Terror
by Gary Kern
Enigma, 450 pp., $29

Along the way, Krivitsky aided French, British, and American counterintelligence agencies, before he was found dead in a Washington hotel room where he had registered under an assumed name in 1941. The District of Columbia's police, no more competent then than now, initially treated the death as a suicide, contaminated the evidence, and mishandled the investigation. Because Krivitsky had warned friends never to believe that he would commit suicide, anti-Communists seized on several anomalies to insist that he had been murdered. His death has remained a mystery ever since, with some clues pointing to suicide and others to murder.

Krivitsky's story and his fate have figured in virtually every account of Soviet espionage over the past fifty years. He played a major role in Soviet espionage in the 1920s and 1930s, working at various times for both the NKVD and the GRU (Soviet military intelligence), and had a hand in or knew about more than a few of the most important Soviet spies embedded in European nations. Many of his revelations and hints proved prescient: He accurately predicted the Nazi-Soviet Pact was in the works and gave the British clues that should have led them to uncover Kim Philby and Donald Maclean. But it is his mysterious death that has provided fodder for numerous conspiracy theories over the years. Did he really kill himself, depressed by his prospects for the future, alienated from friends, convinced he was under NKVD surveillance and tormented by his own previous crimes? Or was he murdered by the ruthless regime he had once served, whose death squads were methodically eliminating traitors and turncoats, betrayed by people he thought he could trust?

There has never been a full-scale biography of Krivitsky. His own autobiography, *In Stalin's Secret Service*, originally published in 1939, is not fully revealing, glossing over many details and sanitizing others. But now, Gary Kern, an independent scholar who has written about Soviet espionage (sometimes with former KGB officers), has produced *A Death in Washington: Walter G. Krivitsky and the Stalin Terror*. Kern has ferreted out every available source, including some Russian archives, although he was unable to penetrate either Military Intelligence archives or see what the old KGB files held. He also had access to long-secret British intelligence reports about

Harvey Klehr is Andrew Mellon professor of politics and history at Emory University.

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Walter Krivitsky

Enigma Books

Krivitsky's debriefing by MI5. He carefully considers every factional nugget known about Krivitsky and evaluates different theories about his behavior and motives. *A Death in Washington* is well written, clear, and filled with stimulating insights into the issue of political defection.

Through no fault of his own, however, Kern is unable to provide the closure to the Krivitsky case that has been achieved with other espionage cases as a result of the opening of Russian and American archives. Although he parses every detail about the defector's last days and actions, he is unable to put a smoking gun definitely in either Krivitsky's hand or that of any of the individuals suspected as assassins over the years. He ends by speculating that Krivitsky's death might have been a "preemptive suicide" prompted by fear of actions directed against his family.

Walter Krivitsky was one of many assumed names taken by Samuel Ginsberg, born in 1899 in Podwoloczyska, on the Austrian side of the border between the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires, a small town populated by Poles, Austrians, Ukrainians, Russians, and Jews in what is now Poland. Persecuted, poor, and idealistic, young Jews from this region were often attracted to the vision of emancipation offered by communism: Krivitsky and five of his friends from this backwater became Soviet spies. (Those five friends would all end up murdered by the regime to which they devoted their lives.)

Krivitsky joined the Communist youth movement in 1912 and by 1920 was a member of Soviet Military Intelligence. His first assignment was to undermine the Polish government on behalf of the USSR. He worked to foment a German revolution in 1923. For much of the 1920s and 1930s he supervised an extensive military intelligence network in Western Europe; among his employees was Margaret Browder, sister of the head of the American Communist party, and Pierre Cot, a French cabinet minister. During the Spanish Civil War he helped spirit the Spanish Republican government's gold supply to Moscow. And he killed one of his own agents, whom he suspected of being an informer.

Ultimately, Krivitsky's loyalty to one of his childhood friends, Ignace Poretsky, also known as Reiss, led to his defection. Poretsky was preparing to defect from Soviet intelligence as a protest against Stalin; he urged Krivitsky to join him. Unable to agree to such a drastic course, Krivitsky tried to warn Poretsky that assassination squads were tracking him but failed to save his old comrade, whose bullet-riddled body was found alongside a road in Switzerland in September 1937. When Krivitsky was then ordered to kill Poretsky's widow in October, he went into hiding, used connections to obtain French papers, and in November 1938 came to the United States.

The American government was not particularly welcoming. The Immigration and Naturalization Service grudgingly admitted him on a visitor's visa. It kept trying to deport him as a dangerous Communist who had entered America under false pretenses, even as it extended the visa of Australian-born Communist labor leader Harry Bridges, who lied about his ties to the CPUSA. Congressman Samuel Dickstein of New York, himself on the Soviet payroll, tried to get him deported. J. Edgar Hoover was angered that Krivitsky had not first come to the FBI and was, furthermore, embarrassed by his revelations about NKVD espionage in America. Communist thugs shadowed and threatened him, and party periodicals denounced him as a fraud.

Krivitsky was not the only Soviet defector whose bona fides were questioned, not just by local Communists, but also by Western governments. Former spies do not make the most reliable-sounding witnesses. Accustomed to lying and prevaricating as a matter of course, they find it difficult to speak freely and fully about what they know. Like Whittaker Chambers and General Alexander Orlov, with whom he worked in Spain (and both of whom left communism in the same period), Krivitsky retained a sense of loyalty to his old comrades that made him reluctant to expose some of those with whom he worked. Just as Chambers tried to protect Alger Hiss (and in so doing told lies that came back to haunt him), so Krivitsky

Demonstrators at "The Day of Political Prisoners" in 1998. CORBIS.

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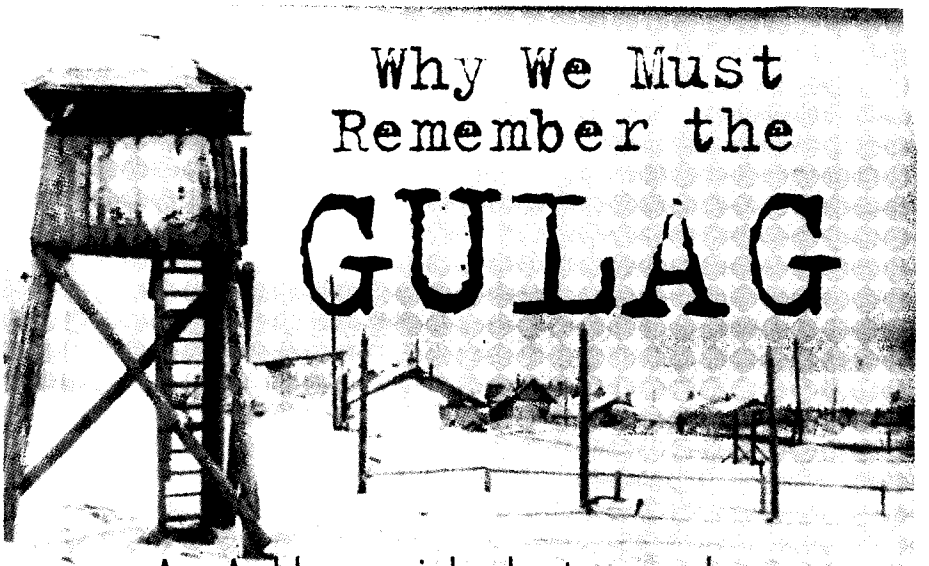
sometimes shaded the truth or avoided full disclosure.

It was not just concern for former spies that constrained the defectors of the time. Usually, all they brought with them from the Soviet Union was the information in their heads. Orlov absconded with enough cash to live frugally in hiding for more than a decade. But he was an exception. The only thing of value most defectors had was information that had to be rationed out carefully, lest its full disclosure leave the individual without any chips left to bargain for financial support. The pressure to invent new revelations or embellish old ones could be intense. Krivitsky died before he had to face the difficulty of earning a living once the money from his articles and book had been spent.

Just as disconcerting was the fate of family and friends. Orlov sent a private letter to Stalin warning that if his relatives were harmed he would expose such important Soviet spies as Philby, Burgess, and Maclean. Spared Stalin's wrath, he made good on his promise and took his knowledge of their treachery to his grave, despite exposing numerous other spies. Whittaker Chambers warned Soviet spymasters that he was prepared to identify Soviet spies if he or his family was harmed. Not until the Nazi-Soviet alliance did he go to American authorities, and even then he was careful about what he said. Krivitsky and his old comrade Poretsky went public with their defection; both died, and so did Krivitsky's wife's brother. Krivitsky himself was suspicious of everyone he met, often with good reason. Convinced that he was in Stalin's cross-hairs, he alienated friends with his suspicions and moods.

It seems appropriate, as Kern notes, that the name "Krivitsky" means *crooked*, *twisted*, or *awry* in Russian. He jumped on board one of the most destructive political movements ever invented and was crushed when he jumped off. Perhaps someday the complete records will reveal whether that movement murdered him or just drove him to suicide. In the meantime, *A Death in Washington* records his travels and travails with as much detail as we can hope for. ♦



All pictures: Doubleday.

Why We Must Remember the GULAG

Anne Applebaum reminds us how tyranny works.

by Melana Zyla Vickers

To the famous question raised by Robert Conquest in his *Reflections on a Ravaged Century*—Are the crimes of the Nazis worse than the crimes of the Stalinists?—I have always been compelled, by filial emotion and family history, to answer that they were about equal. My great uncle, a Ukrainian nationalist, was shot in the head execution-style by Chekists. His wife, my great aunt, spent twelve years in Stalinist concentration camps and another decade in internal exile. My paternal grandmother was imprisoned by the Nazis and tattooed because she "looked like a Jew," and escaped a fate in concentration camps only through the bribing of local officials. My maternal grandfather was taken prisoner by the Gestapo.

Gulag
A History
by Anne Applebaum
Doubleday, 677 pp., $35

Now Anne Applebaum, in the first and last chapters of her powerful *Gulag: A History*, takes up the same question. My more elaborated answer, informed by her book, must be: If the Nazi record is worse because its perpetrators more deliberately and successfully murdered their targeted groups, then the Soviet record is worse because its perpetrators have managed to escape the kind of universal denunciation we level against the Nazis.

Melana Zyla Vickers is a senior fellow at the Independent Women's Forum and a columnist at TechCentralStation.com.

There's reason to expect they will continue to escape, according to Applebaum. She begins *Gulag* by wondering why, in the Hollywood imagination, in the writings of American scholars and journalists, and in the observations of regular travelers to the former Soviet Union, "the crimes of Stalin do not inspire the same visceral reaction as do the crimes of Hitler."

She blames the blind leftism of a majority of the intellectuals of our era, which has made them loath to condemn a system whose ideological principles they continue to hold dear.

She blames the fact that our society doesn't have a mental picture of Soviet atrocities, because "no television cameras ever filmed the Soviet camps or their victims, as they had done in Germany" at the end of World War II.

And she notes that people in the West generally hold "a firm conviction that the Second World War was a wholly just war" and that to admit "that by consigning millions of people to Soviet rule at Yalta, the Western allies might have helped others commit crimes against humanity would undermine the moral clarity of our memories of that era."

One might also add that the sheer longevity of the Soviet regime eroded outrage against it, and the implosion—as opposed to defeat—of its center of gravity meant there was never any

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Nuremberg-style victor's justice imposed on Moscow.

Within the former Soviet Union, there are other reasons why the seventy-two-year Communist regime remains unaccountable for its evils. First and foremost is the republic of Russia's refusal to shoulder the guilt. As Applebaum says, "Russia, the country that has inherited the Soviet Union's diplomatic and foreign policies, its embassies, its debts and its seat at the United Nations, continues to act as if it has not inherited the Soviet Union's history. Russia does not have a national museum dedicated to the history of repression. Nor does Russia have a national place of mourning, a monument which officially recognizes the suffering of victims and their families." What's more, across the former Soviet Union, those complicit in the decades of repression remain in power: Thirteen of fifteen former Soviet republics are ruled by ex-Communists. Similarly complicit lower-ranking officials permeate the corridors of political power, business, and academia. Self-protection motivates them to repress efforts to educate the citizenry, present anti-Communist dissidents as national heroes in school textbooks, bring evildoers to judgment, build museums about Soviet atrocities, etc.

The educating is left to Applebaum and the dissidents on whose discouragingly rare memoirs she draws. Her account of the concentration camps, in which eighteen million people spent some period of time between 1929 and 1953 (and millions from 1953 to the fall of Soviet Communism in 1991), is nauseatingly vivid. She recounts the political prisoners' terror and isolation, the brutality of the secret police, the rearrests following the end of a sentence, and the millions of deaths through illness, hunger, cold—or brutally quick execution. I was, as other readers will be, so sickened by the content of the book's inner chapters that I was driven to tears many times. A warning: Get *Gulag* for the first and last chapters, and read the others only when there's time to wallow in sadness for a long time after putting it down.

In a particularly disconcerting section, Applebaum explains how millions of children were either imprisoned with their mothers, or were born in the Gulag. Babies were taken from their mothers to be watched in batches of dozens by rough-mannered nurses. The nurses "took off their nightclothes and washed them in ice-cold water. The babies didn't even dare cry. They made little sniffing noises like old men and let out low hoots. This awful hooting noise would come from the cots for days at a time," wrote political dissident Hava Volovich. Of her own baby, Volovich wrote: "Little Eleanora, who was now fifteen months old, soon realized that her pleas for 'home' were in vain. She stopped reaching out for me when I visited her; she would turn away in silence. On the last day of her life, when I picked her up (they allowed me to breast-feed her) she stared wide-eyed somewhere off into the distance, then started to beat her weak little fists on my face. . . . Then she pointed down at her bed. In the evening, when I came back with my bundle of firewood, . . . I found her lying naked in the morgue among the corpses of the adult prisoners."

Applebaum doesn't chronicle just the deaths of Gulag prisoners, but also the brave and honor-filled survival of those anti-Soviet writers—Ukrainian, Baltic, and Georgian nationalists, Helsinki Watch Group members, Jews, Tatars, Christian clergy—and others who were imprisoned, in that quintessentially totalitarian way, for "who they were" rather than "what they

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did." She tells of their small, humane acts: their system of leaving books for subsequent populations of prisoners, their knock-based communications between cells. And she writes of their truly unbelievable political activism: their hunger strikes, campaigns of disobedience, and other methods of gaining attention from supporters in the West including, significantly, President Ronald Reagan.

Ultimately, though, Applebaum's message is that in today's climate where the sins of the Soviet Union go unaccounted for, these dissidents are disappearing into the Gulag's snow-

drifts rather than rising from them. Toward the end of the book she retells Natan Sharansky's account of how, in 1982, Estonian dissident Harold Kivilio was released after twenty-five years' imprisonment into the care of his only surviving relative, his sister. She warned him not to talk politics and said her family knew nothing of his experience. Kivilio ordered her to stop the car and said, "You don't know me and I don't know you. Goodbye."

If we in America and Western Europe—particularly our educators and our media—don't help those in the former Soviet Union talk often and openly about these politics and learn about these experiences, then we've as much as pushed Kivilio out of the car ourselves. ♦

Stalin's Cheerleader

The fellow-traveling of historian Eric Hobsbawm.

By David Evanier

In *Interesting Times: A Twentieth-Century Life*, Eric Hobsbawm, the British historian who was named by the Queen of England in 1998 a Companion of Honor on the recommendation of Prime Minister Tony Blair, records his love affair with communism. The marriage lasted from Hobsbawm's coming to political consciousness in the early 1930s to the collapse of the evil empire in 1991. And, in truth, Hobsbawm's ardor hasn't really abated, even yet. He writes that to this day he has "an indulgence and tenderness" toward "the memory and tradition of the USSR." He cherishes his tattered Communist party song pamphlets from the Communist rallies of his Berlin days. "The dream of the October Revolution is still there somewhere inside me."

Interesting Times
A Twentieth-Century Life
by Eric J. Hobsbawm
Knopf, 250 pp., $30

Interestingly, nowhere except in writing such autumnal reflections of his salad days does Hobsbawm reveal much semblance of having spent his life as a human being. As he writes, from childhood onward, "Human beings did not appear to interest me much, either singly or collectively; certainly much less than birds." His coldness and lack of curiosity extends to his entire family; of his sister he writes, "We had very little in common, . . . and my intellectualism and lack of interest in the world of people gave me a protection she lacked."

In a recent interview, Hobsbawm stated that the horrors of the Gulag did not affect his belief as a Communist. An interviewer asked, "What that comes down to is saying that had the radiant tomorrow actually been created, the loss of fifteen, twenty million people might have been justified?" Hobsbawm's answer was "Yes"—although he granted that the sacrifice of the murdered millions was "excessive."

Eric Hobsbawm was born in Egypt in 1917; his Jewish parents moved to Vienna when he was two. Both died during the depression, and Hobsbawm moved to Berlin in 1931, living with his uncle. His childhood was marked by these peripatetic moves and the insecurity they engendered, as well as the rising specter of Hitler. In 1933 his family regrouped in London, and he joined the Communist party while at King's College in Cambridge.

"The months in Berlin made me a lifelong Communist," Hobsbawm says. It was the apocalyptic atmosphere of the last days of the Weimar Republic in January 1933 that appealed to him, the clash of Communists and Nazis (when they were not working together), Hitler taking power, the Reichstag fire, the flaming street posters with images of violence. He experienced what he defined as the "mass ecstasy" of marching with his comrades in the freezing cold on dark wintry streets between shadowy buildings, an experience he defines as akin to sex, "and unlike the sexual climax, at any rate for men, it can be prolonged for hours."

Hobsbawm began to enjoy the benefits of Western democracy as soon as he reached England, with a scholarship to King's College followed by a teaching appointment at Birkbeck College in London. He makes clear his passionate identification with the Soviet Union,

David Evanier is the author of Red Love, *a novel about the Rosenberg case.*

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Knopf. Other two pictures: CORBIS.

Eric Hobsbawm

even his sympathy for the Cambridge spies ("One minor spin-off from 1930's Communism," he pooh poohs), but his prose glides over most of the horrific events in the history of communism, including the Hitler-Stalin Pact, which he disposes of with one mention as "the line-change of the autumn of 1939." Hobsbawm writes that his love of jazz (a subject he coyly refers to as a passion, but with no real explication) "replaced first love," because he was "ashamed" of his physical appearance. But communism was his only real love. He was struck by Stalin's execrable *Short History*, "which made Marxism so irresistible." Perhaps embedded in that "love" was a self-hatred that found revenge in supporting one of the most bestial murder machines in history.

One can learn almost nothing about the history of communism from Hobsbawm's *Interesting Times*—nothing about the show trials, the torture and execution of millions, the Communist betrayal of Spain. Hobsbawm's stunted, euphemistic language reveals more than he intends. Communists are always good, and anti-Communists are "dreadful," "hysterical," "ill-tempered." Opposition to communism is, in Hobsbawm's words, "espionage mania" (though he acknowledges Soviet espionage existed, he seems not to disapprove of it). He admits that the Soviet Union "was a monstrous all-embracing bureaucracy"—only to add immediately: "The new society they were building was not a bad society . . . good people doing an honest day's work . . . no class distinctions."

Hobsbawm's prose is always at a distance from reality. He writes of "the hecatombs of the Stalin era," not torture chambers and concentration camps. An old Hungarian Communist, Tibor Szamuely, "claimed to have had the usual spell in a camp during the dictator's final lunacies." Note "claimed," as if it's probably not true; note "lunacies," which is another glideover.

The Doctors' Plot show trials had "an anti-Semitic tinge." Hobsbawm writes of Stalin as "a terrible old man." Does this mean he was nicer when he was young or middle-aged? That he got grouchy? In the USSR, Hobsbawm writes, there was "almost paranoiac fear of espionage." Get that "almost." He writes that he stayed in the party because of the "titanic achievements [of the USSR] and still with the unlimited potential of socialism"—an unconsciously apt phrase, considering the fate of the *Titanic*. The attacks of September 11 led America to decide "implausibly" on a life-and-death

struggle, but they were in truth "certainly no cause for alarm for the globe's only superpower. . . . Public mouths flooded the western world with froth as hacks searched for words about the unsayable and unfortunately found them." Who is the real threat? "The enemies of reason . . . the heirs of fascism . . . who sit in the governments of India, Israel, and Italy."

There is no doubt that Hobsbawm has acquired a remarkable worldwide academic cachet as a historian with his scholarly books, essays, and lectures. He holds many honorary degrees and has won a bevy of other honors, including membership in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Now, at eighty-two, he is being showered with encomiums. Hobsbawm explains his success as due to the consolidation of the left in the academies and the Third World.

But another reason is surely that many liberals have never come to grips with the fact that Stalin was as evil as Hitler, and that Soviet socialism was as deadly as Nazism. The New York literati would not be currently flocking to readings at the KGB Bar on the Lower East Side of Manhattan—premises once occupied by a Ukrainian branch of the Communist party—if it were called the Gestapo Bar. ♦

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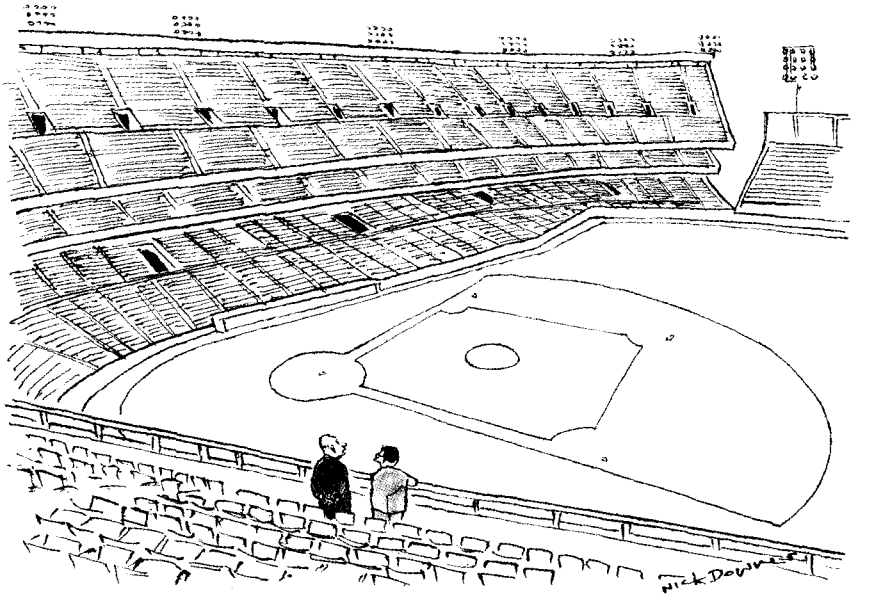


"I built it, but they didn't come."

Books in Brief

***Washington Schlepped Here: Walking in the Nation's Capital* by Christopher Buckley (Crown, 160 pp., $16).** Don't mistake this charming little book for a comprehensive guide to Washington, D.C., complete with maps and metro stops and museum hours. Instead, look here for a breezy guided tour of the heart of Washington, laid out in four walks, hosted by the satirical novelist Christopher Buckley. The first walk begins at Union Station (did you know the great hall was modeled on the Baths of Diocletian?) and takes in the Capitol (whose interior Mark Twain once called "a delirium tremens of art"), the statue of Grant at the foot of Capitol Hill, and the museums on the Mall as far as the Washington Monument.

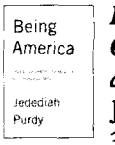
The second walk begins at the Washington Monument and goes to the Lincoln Memorial via the Holocaust Museum, the Jefferson and FDR memorials, and the Korean and Vietnam war memorials. The third walk takes in Lafayette Square, Ford's Theater, and the house where Lincoln died. And the fourth is a tour through Arlington cemetery, ending at the grave of the city's original designer, Pierre Charles L'Enfant, which has "the best view in town."

Washington Schlepped Here is like a tray of petits fours—colorful, bite-sized delights arrayed in great number. The jaunty tone (its early, rejected title was *Das Capital*) is sustained by snappy writing (the East Wing of the National Gallery has "more edges than a Swiss army knife"), a sympathetic eye (the Air and Space Museum is "the ultimate boy's bedroom"), and political spice. Its irreverence (Jefferson, who liked to receive diplomats in his slippers, was "our first grunge president") is balanced by a hearty patriotism, also known in these pages as vitamin P.

Once upon a time a speechwriter for Vice President Bush and now editor of *Forbes FYI* magazine, Buckley supplements fact with resonant anecdote. My favorite is his account of a party at the Air and Space Museum for the 75th anniversary of Charles Lindbergh's flight, hosted by the great man's daughter, Reeve. Buckley describes listening to the god of his youth, John Glenn, reminisce about the god of *his* youth, Lindbergh, while several Lindbergh great-great-grandchildren clambered over *Friendship 7* "as if it were a playground choo-choo."

Washington Schlepped Here is the perfect gift for a newcomer to Washington, as well as a happy addition to the shelves of the lifer.

—Claudia Winkler



***Being America: Liberty, Commerce, and Violence in an American World* by Jedediah Purdy (Knopf, 329 pp., $24).** Jedediah Purdy gained fame in 1999 with his anti-irony manifesto, *For Common Things*. His sophomore effort, *Being America*, is just that—sophomoric. The reader works through more than three hundred pages to obtain such insights as: "Peoples cannot take responsibility for each other, but they serve each other when they take responsibility for themselves." Such propositions are true enough, of course, but they are far from earthshaking. And Purdy's habit of seeing three sides to every question makes for slow reading.

Purdy's other bad habit is frequent name-dropping. On one pair of facing pages, he invokes Saint Augustine, the IMF's Jeffrey Sachs, Gautama Buddha (helpfully identified as the "founder of Buddhism"), Plato, and Joseph Stiglitz. And must Edmund Burke, Alexis de Tocqueville, and Adam Smith really appear as often as they do? Neither the living nor the dead get much rest in *Being America*, if they have a platitude to contribute.

The book contains some interesting tales of encounters and conversations from the young Purdy's travels in the Middle East and Asia. But these redeeming bits are lost amid pages of analysis and background. The result is no fresh insight into Purdy's question: What does it mean to "be America"?

—Katherine Mangu-Ward

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"It's a matter of public record that this war with Iraq is largely the brainchild of a group of neoconservative intellectuals, who view it as a pilot project."
—Paul Krugman, *New York Times*, March 18, 2003

Parody

Washington Times

TUESDAY, MAY 13, 2003 ★★★★

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'We're also capable of global conspiracy,' Christian groups assert

'Jews not the only schemers,' say leaders

By Larry Witham
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Stung by charges that cliques of highly placed Jews have hijacked the Bush administration's foreign policy for their own political purposes, several Christian groups met today to declare that they too are clever and devious enough to carry out a secret plan for world domination.

"All this talk about Wolfowitz and Perle and the neocons is deeply insulting to us," says Baxter Thaxter-Baxter III, president of the Christian Niceness League. "It suggests we're not smart enough to run our own hegemonic empire. But look at the names in the White House: Bush, Rove, Rice, Cheney. Notice anything? Christian! When you stop and think about it, we're insidious. We're everywhere!"

Scholars confirm that in fact there are many highly placed Christians in government. "Have you ever seen Treasury Secretary John Snow? Extremely Christian," says Notre Dame professor Sean Patrick O'Patrick. "Moreover, two out of the nine Democratic presidential candidates have no Jewish relatives. Even Alan Greenspan once dated a Christian."

Religious activists insist that while the secret Christian conspiracy to control the world may be more polite than the secret Jewish conspiracy, it is just as relentless. They point to a document, The Protocols of the Elders of Augusta, which appears to be simply a fashion guide to yachting ties but is in fact a subtle statement about world power.

"The problem is that the Christians who dominate the media and the world financial system continually suppress the true nature of the power structure," agrees Percy Smother-Clarke, CEO of Percy's Blueberry Bagels, a food service firm. "In fact, our world-economy steering committee meets every Thursday afternoon in

see **DOMINATION,** *page A12*

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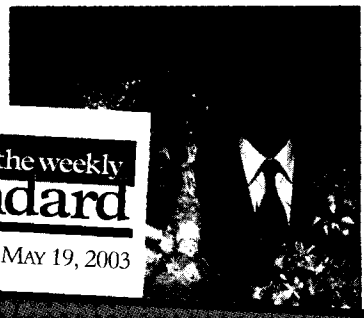

the weekly
Standard
MAY 19, 2003

Mass arranged marriages gaining fans among young

By Spike de Borchgrave
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Julie Calvert, a 23-year-old Wyoming teacher, watches nervously in a mirror as her mother adjusts

After watching their parents' generation fractured by divorce, a growing number of young Americans is turning to expert matchmakers to select their mates. Recent studies by Korean researchers have confirmed the efficiency and

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Special Education Insurance for Schools of Choice

Paul T. Hill is a distinguished visiting fellow at the Hoover Institution; a member of Hoover's Koret Task Force on K–12 Education; and a research professor in the University of Washington's Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs.

Laws on the education of handicapped students are a major challenge for charter schools. Schools that remain connected to school districts must pay hundreds of dollars per student to support the central office special education unit. Schools that maintain no connection to school districts must pay for whatever services their handicapped students need, including placement in residential facilities costing as much as $50,000 per pupil.

This sets up a dilemma: **To avoid the financial ruin that could result if a seriously handicapped child were to enroll, many charters stay close to the very districts whose control they hoped to escape.** Further, charters that rely on school districts often get far less than they pay for. Because charter schools hope to avoid labeling children as handicapped, they work hard to solve students' learning problems early. Charters therefore pay a lot for district schools that are careless with the "handicapped" label.

Schools in a voucher system could face the same dilemma. As long as public funding brings an absolute obligation to provide special education services, schools must either affiliate with districts or take huge risks.

Some charter schools are forming special education risk pools, which are good until one school's unexpected costs create havoc with many schools' budgets.

A better solution would be insurance for special education costs. Schools could buy insurance coverage from commercial underwriters, including deductibles for small extra costs and "catastrophic coverage" for the rare instance when a student requires residential placement. A mature insurance program could be loss rated, so that schools with excellent track records of solving children's problems without applying the "handicapped" label would pay less than schools that use the label carelessly.

A special education insurance program would be good for schools and for children. Schools would know in advance what special education would cost each year—no awful surprises. Students would also benefit from schools' efforts to solve learning problems before they became overwhelming. Children who truly need special services would also benefit because the funding would be guaranteed by insurance.

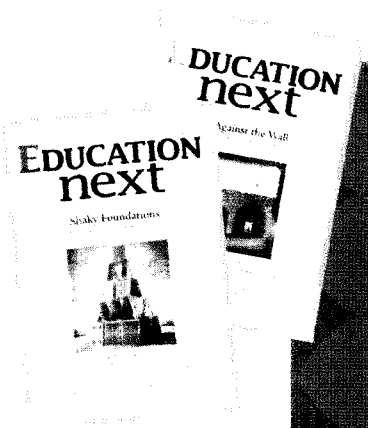
No insurance underwriter has offered such insurance, for two reasons: First, school districts have covered their own costs, largely by robbing other general education accounts to pay for their burgeoning special education offices. Within districts, the managers of special education have had no incentive to control costs, and superintendents are afraid to cross the groups that represent handicapped children. Second, information about individual schools' expenditures has been hidden in district budgets that record costs by function, not by school.

An insurance industry could emerge rapidly, however, if philanthropies offered to support start-up insurance funds and pay excess losses for small pilot projects. Charter and voucher-funded schools could buy insurance for a few hundred dollars per pupil and have their costs adjusted annually on the basis of experience.

This small innovation, which relies more on business entrepreneurship than on policy activism, could make a huge difference in the numbers of groups willing to start schools of choice and in the financial survival of new schools.

— *Paul T. Hill*

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University



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